Sunday, June 1, 2008 ★★ Vol. 23 / No. 177 www.inquirer.net

Droppables at your next cocktail party: 50 unforgettable movie lines

Great Pinoy moments in world cinema no matter if stereotyped as houseboys, gangsters, whores, corrupt pols

Asia's first truly independent guide for region's annual best restos categorized by country, city and cuisine
Sunday Inquirer Magazine

What busy, busy doctors don't say about cancer: The cure is in prevention
Talk of the Town / A14

Celtics, Lakers relaunch storied NBA rivalry
Sports / A32

Tony nominee pets Filipino lyrics for Pinoy starring in musical
Entertainment / J1

PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

How to plan your wedding from abroad
Lifestyle / G1

Immigration arrests of foreign models mar Fashion Week
Lifestyle / D1

GOLD RUSH Framed by foliage, the sky puts on a dramatic display of color when the sun calls it a day and sets on People's Park in the Sky in Tagaytay City. And suddenly, as the poet says, it is evening.

₱2-B subsidy for power

Gov't aid to help the poor pay electricity bills

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE GOVERNMENT HAS SET ASIDE A P2-BILLION SUBsidy as a way to help the poor pay their power bills.

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral yesterday said she would present her proposed cash transfer program for small electricity users at the first meeting of the Presidential Task Force on Energy tomorrow in Malacañang.

Cabral has been assigned by President Macapagal-Arroyo to draft a cash transfer program for small electricity users using P2 billion, which is part of the P4 billion earlier earmarked by Ms Arroyo for allocation to help people cope with soaring energy costs.

The P4 billion is the money so far collected by the government from the value-added tax (VAT) on electricity. Officials expect the amount to reach P10 billion this year.

"This [subsidy] is help for the poor because power costs have gone up," Cabral said in a phone interview.

She said the "target" of the cash transfer was the 1.9 million small users of electricity, or those called lifeline users consuming less than 100 kilowatt hours a month in areas covered by Manila Electric Co. (Meralco).

These lifeline users are being served by Meralco in Metro Manila and the provinces of Cavite, Pampanga, Bulacan, Rizal and Quezon.

Cabral said that if she were to calculate the allocation of the P2-billion cash transfer, 1.9 million lifeline users would be entitled to P1,000 a year, or P100 a month.

The subsidy will help, for example, a user of 80 kWh of electricity a month whose bill is P212, she said.

Going by this estimate, Cabral said, the subsidy could be given to small electricity users for a period of from 10 months to one year.

"These are all tentative options that I will present to the task force," she said.

Cabral said she had yet to decide whether this cash transfer program would cover lifeline users in Metro Manila only, or those in the entire Meralco franchise area (National Capital

FOR NUMBERS A13

Underground river moving closer to top 7 in online vote

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PUERTO PRINCESA—THE PHILIPpines is gunning for four spots in the New 7 Wonders of Nature online survey to which developing countries, mostly Asian, are dominating because of the voting power of their populous.

The race is creating a stir in this capital city of Palawan as two of the country's four bets are found in the province—Tubbataha Reef and the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park.

"This is very exciting for us here in Palawan," said Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn as he urged Filipinos to cast their votes for the country's pride.

In various strategic spots in Puerto Princesa, including the entrance to the underground river national park itself, banners and streamers call on people to log on to www.new7wonders.com and vote for Tubbataha Reef and the Subterranean River.

"The subterranean river came in last at No. 275 during the initial nomination and now it is one rank shy of being in the top 7," said Hagedorn.

As of the May 31 tally, Tubbataha and the underground river ranked third and eighth, respectively, in the ongoing search for the world's seven most outstanding natural environments.

UNDERGROUND A10

Lanao villagers get to shower, finally

By Tarra Quismundo

TUBOD, LANAO DEL NORTE—FOR the first time, the First Lady of Barangay Candis can take a shower.

Some 275 households in Candis—half living below the poverty line—now enjoy running water which, until recently, was considered a luxury in these parts.

LANAO A6

Close to 100, this Pinoy still works

By Jack O. Marfil-Schwalbach
Contributor

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA—ON THE PHONE, THE SEcurity guard at the office of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is adamant: "Sir, you have to come down here to sign in your guest."

He hangs up and turns to the guest, saying: "Is Mr. Bacani sick? How come his voice sounded kinda strange?"

"He's not ill," the visitor replies. "He's just old—97, actually."

"What?" says the guard, gaping. "Call him back. Tell him it's okay." Then he pulls out his walkie-talkie. "Tell him I'll find somebody to take you up there."

Alberto S. Bacani—"Bert" to his family and friends—works on the ninth floor of the EPA building. At 97, he is probably the oldest person working in any federal agency. (As a matter of policy, the US Office of Personnel Management refuses to divulge information about the age of any federal worker.)

Until he was 96, Bacani was working full time—eight hours a day, five days a week.

CLOSE A15

GO-TO GUY At 97, Alberto Bacani keeps going, and going, and going

After 359 years, local hero gets his due

By Vicente Lubrin
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—EXACTLY 359 years after he started a rebellion in Samar that spread like wildfire to other parts of the country, local hero Agustin Sumoroy is finally getting well deserved recognition.

The National Historical Institute (NHI) led by its chair, Ambeth Ocampo, is to unveil this morning a marker at the foot of Sumoroy's life-size statue in the town plaza of Balangiga in the province of Northern Samar.

While Sumoroy's name may be known in many places and has appeared in a number of books, this is the first time that the hero will be officially recognized for his role in Philippine history, Balangiga Mayor Ricardo Cuta said.

A native of Balangiga, Sumoroy was one of the early Filipinos who rose in rebellion against the Spanish colonizers.

Historians consider the Sumoroy uprising (or the Binayan Revolt of 1649-1650) "the first major rebellion to burst wide open during the first 84 years" of Spanish colonial rule in the Philippines.

AFTER A15

FOR BETTER OR WORSE Deceased Magdalo 2nd Lt. Jose Sangalang poses with his bride, Jane Molino, after their wedding at St. Michael Church in Camp Crame yesterday. Their sponsors included Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danny Lim, detainees themselves.

Behind bars, convicts learn fashion

By Alex Y. Vergara

ON TUESDAYS, DON'T CALL INMates designer Pury Quiñones. Friends and clients used to wonder what he was up to, since he never turned back or answered calls. Never on Tuesday.

For the past eight months, the diminutive designer has been conducting weekly workshops for 30 artistically inclined inmates at the New Bilibid Prison's maximum security compound in Muntinlupa City.

In less than four months, the inmates started collaborating with Quiñones, who allowed them to handpaint dresses, skirts, blouses and wraps ordered by his customers. The designer pays each prisoner per piece.

So far, he's the only designer to conduct fashion-related workshops at Bilibid.

"Each artist can earn from P100 to P500 per piece depending on the work," said Quiñones. "The more they produce, the more they earn."

Themes vary depending on the designer's whims. Nature has been a favorite subject. On the day we visited Quiñones' class, he asked participants to come up with their individual takes on pink and white flamingos.

The ready-to-wear pieces have found a market among Quiñones' clients at Bohon at The Podium and

BEHIND A6

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

GMA to bat for CARP extension

Palace: She will certify as urgent 5-yr lease on land distribution

By Christine O. Avendaño

WITH LESS THAN TWO WEEKS TO GO BEFORE the country' agrarian reform program expires, President Macapagal-Arroyo is ready to certify as urgent a new bill extending land redistribution for five years, Presidential Management Staff Secretary Gerge Remonde said yesterday.

"The President will certify the bill as urgent now that the House committee on agrarian reform has passed it," Remonde said in a phone interview.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., however, said certifying the bill at this time hour did not seem realistic and government officials had yet to explain and account for the funds they spent on land acquisition and distribution.

Pimentel said he did not think it would be possible to pass a CARP extension bill before its expiration on June 10 because the Senate committee on agrarian reform was still hearing the measure. The committee is headed by Sen. Greg Honasan who is linked to the administration bloc.

"As a matter of fact, Senator Honasan told me that it might not be possible to come up with a report and then have this left to debate that report in the new several days," Pimentel told reporters after the Subi-Hanjin press luncheon yesterday. "It looks bad at this point."

Some senators are backing the extension, arguing that the program was ineffective.

Speaker Prospero Nograles, on the other hand, promised his "best effort" in making the bill passed before Congress adjourns on June 11. But he said nothing would come of such efforts "if the Senate opposes CARP."

But "no, it's not dead yet," he said in a phone interview.

He added: "If this is certified as urgent by the President, the Senate can adopt the (House version if they will agree with (its provisions). And then we can go into the bicameral conference committee."

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, principal author and sponsor of the measure, said he wrote President Arroyo early on Friday to certify the measure as urgent.

Legislation is needed to continue the acquisition and distribution (DAR) component of CARP. The authors are seeking to extend the DAR by at least five years to cover the distribution of 1.1 million hectares of agricultural land.

Doubtful about Senate

Rodolfo Bacnis, director of the Bureau of Land Acquisition and Distribution of the Department of Agriculture, was not optimistic the Senate would approve its version before adjournment.

In case Congress fails to pass the legislation, Bacnis said the DAR would ask both chambers to issue a joint resolution authorizing it to use the 2008 budget for land acquisition and distribution.

"Hopefully, they can issue a joint resolution even just extending the implementation up to December while working on the bill for the rest of the 14th Congress," he said later in an individual interview.

"We just need the authority to spend," he said.

The DAR hopes to distribute 360,000 hectares out of the 1.1 million hectares this year, according to Bacnis.

Where did DAR funds go?

Pimentel said he was looking the extension, but lamented that DAR Secretary Nasser Pangandaman had so far failed to fully account for the disposition of the CARP funds.

He said he had asked Pangandaman to submit a report, but received only a two-page, incomplete document from him.

"My goodness, they can't just send me a two-page letter, (excluding the cover letter, merely stating 'money received, money spent.' I think it's sheer foolishness," he said.

"I want CARP to be extended, but in a reasonable manner. They shouldn't use it to make more money. That's not right," he added.

Meanwhile, farmers from Sta. Ana, Batangas, yesterday denounced Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita for issuing an order allowing the conversion of 124 hectares of agricultural land into an ecotourism estate.

Hypocrisy, not serious

In a statement, farmers belonging to Laiya-Balete Samahang Magsasaka (Lasamag), what are petitioning for distribution of the property, said Ermita's order "betrays Malacañang's hypocrisy and lack of seriousness" about the land conversion moratorium.

"To call for a moratorium while approving land conversion is patently hypocritical," said Lasamag president Noemi Ayupp. He slammed a conversion order was granted to Hemisphere Development Corp. even though the company's exploration had been revoked by the Securities and Exchange Commission in 2003.

IN THE KNOW

THE CARL BAG Agrarian Reform (CARP) was that the Government had year by subsidized landowners in the form of Republic certificates (CARP) bonds, which the government had to buy from landowners. Under the program, farmers were given land titles and were required to pay the government for the land over a period of years.

House Bill No. 5910, CARP was drafted in accordance that included the peasant group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, Anakan Marino at Federation of Peasant Women and Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura.

CARP, to be approved by outgoing Congress Speaker Jose Prospero Nograles, Bayan Muna and Lagumbayan Rep. Satur Ocampo, Bayan Muna Rep. Liza Maza and Lagumbayan Rep. Teodoro Casiño, Liza Maza and Lagumbayan Rep. Crispin Beltran, is touted as a replacement for the 20-year-old Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

CARP seeks to distribute land for free and expand agrarian reform coverage to all agricultural lands in the country.

— Jaymee T. Gamboa

Controls sought after rice hits ₱50 in parts of Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—AGRICULTURE officials in Southern Mindanao are advocating stronger regulation of rice distribution and the return of price controls to alleviate the suffering of consumers brought about by the skyrocketing price of rice.

Rogelio Chio, director of the Department of Agriculture in Southern Mindanao, described reports that rice prices had hit ₱50 in some areas in this rice-producing region as "alarming," and announced that the DA was drafting a proposal to Congress aimed at making rice a "restricted commodity."

"This means there should be price controls. We recommend this because a national policy," Chio said during a press conference at the DA office here.

Chio said he discussed the situation with NFA and officials of other government agencies in the region during an emergency meeting held earlier this week.

Chio said the proposal is to revive the sale and pricing of rice will be seen in Speaker Prospero Nograles and Palawan Rep. Abraham Mitra, chair of the committee on agriculture.

He said if the proposal passes to Congress, the sale of rice would be strongly regulated to avoid unscrupulous businessmen from taking advantage of future supply problems.

Reports over the past few days said the price of the staple has risen by ₱6 to ₱10 per kilo from the previous week's average of ₱37 per kilo in the provinces of Davao del Sur, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Compostela Valley and the cities of Digos, Panabo, Digos, Mati and this city.

In Digos City, Davao del Sur, dressing numbers and rank file fighters erupted on residents tried to buy rice from an outlet of the National Food Authority (NFA) on Thursday. The price of commercial rice in the market shot up to ₱47 per kilo in less than two days.

Because of the increase in the price of rice, which the region produces, Lorenzo Camayong, NFA regional manager, said what was really puzzling was that there seemed to be enough supply in the market.

He said an inventory conducted by his office two days ago showed the region's rice stocks were enough for the next 56 to 60 days.

"And more supply was expected because farmers have just finished harvesting. The rice requirement for Region 11 is placed at 9,000 bags per day," Camayong said.

"It's only now that we experienced a disparity of prices in rice. There is no shortage," he said.

To counter the situation, Camayong said the NFA had set up a total of 252,000 outlets throughout the city in addition to the 32 Pigasan sa Pueblo outlets that it had put up in coordination with the Catholic Church.

Jaenalie Loyola, president of BIDA Bida Consumidor Mindanao, vice spectators and boarders for the situation. He also blamed millers, who he claimed were "slowing down the release of stocks" in anticipation of higher prices. *Judy Quilon, Dennis Santos and Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

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Lt. Gen. V. Mayo, NSC exec, was 64

MAYO

RETIRED LT. GEN. Victor A. Mayo, deputy director general of the National Security Council, died yesterday morning. He was 64.

Mayo is survived by his children Penelope and Demetrius and six grandchildren. His wife, Josephine "Jessi" Bevlas Mayo, died last year.

Mayo was the 42nd superintendent of the Philippine Military Academy, from which he graduated with honors in 1966. His military service spanned 33 years.

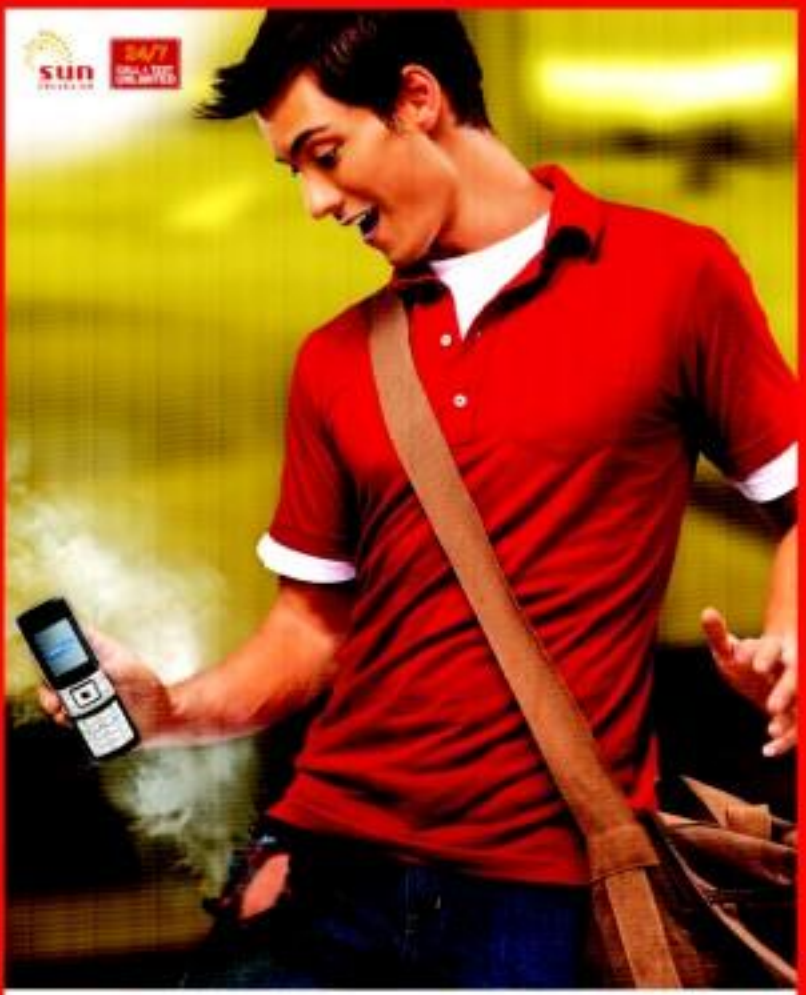
Before his stint at the NSC, Mayo served as vice chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and chair of the AFP Modernization Board.

He also supervised the AFP Housing Board, AFP Disaster Response Task Force, Office of Ethical Standards and Public Accountability, and the Technical Working Group for Legislative Affairs.

Mayo was a five-time recipient of the Distinguished Service Star for his service in various AFP units from 1968 to 1995.

His most remarkable award was the Distinguished Conduct Star for gallantry in the defense of Camp Aguinaldo during the 1989 coup attempt. He received his first award—the AFP Master Parachutist Badge—as junior silver graduating from the PMA.

Mayo's remains lie at Capilla de San Francisco, Sucat-Aviles de San Antonio in Parañaque, Makati City, where Masses will be said at 7 p.m. every day until Wednesday.



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CA-issued Meralco TRO moot, says Garcia

By Dexter L. Lunas

THE LOPEZ FAMILY'S VICTORY during the recent stockholders' meeting of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) was "temporary" and may have come at too high a price, said Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) president and general manager Winston Garcia.

Garcia, who led the government's attempt to wrest control of the giant power utility, said the court injunction issued on Friday preventing the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) from stopping the counting of proxy votes in favor of the Lopez family was "moot and academic."

The Meralco board had ignored the SEC's order and elected Lopez during last Tuesday's controversial election, citing procedural lapses.

"How can (the court) stop the SEC from issuing an order that had already been served?" he said.

However, the TRO granted to Meralco by the Court of Appeals made no mention of stopping the SEC from hearing the issue pension fund's petition questioning the proxy votes, Garcia said.

Pyrrhic victory

"They won a Pyrrhic victory," he said, referring to a victory that comes at too high a price. "Our petition will go on," he added.

Interviewed yesterday by the broom, Garcia showed

GARCIA

no signs of being fazed by the successive setbacks suffered by the state pension fund, first after it failed to gain a majority on the Meralco board, then when the Court of Appeals issued the TRO.

Instead, Garcia assured the public that the boardroom brawl "will be over in a matter of weeks" with the GSIS-led group emerging in control of the 11-man board of directors.

Exclude proxies

"There is no need [for GSIS] to go to the Supreme Court," he said. "We are working with the SEC to expedite the resolution of our petition."

According to him, it was well within the powers of the corporate regulator to nullify the results of the Tuesday's Meralco board election and declare the GSIS group the winner.

This is because the SEC's cease and desist order mandated the company to exclude from the counting all the proxies gather by the Lopez family from their allies. Without those proxies, Garcia said, the GSIS directors would outnumber Lopez nominees five to four, or six to five when counting the company's two independent directors.

No valid order

The Lopez camp, for its part, contended that it never received a valid order from the SEC since the one that was served last week was fraught with defects, including improper form and lacking vital details, docket number and official seal. Neither was the company notified by the SEC that a complaint had been filed against it.

Garcia expressed confidence the SEC will act on a motion the pension fund filed last week and will declare the GSIS bloc the Meralco majority based on a parallel count conducted by the accounting firm SGV & Co., which excluded the controversial proxies.

Replace management

Once the GSIS is declared the Meralco board majority, Garcia said he would move to replace the top management of the power distributor and immediately bring down electricity prices.

"Meralco's mismanagement is the reason we are paying the highest power rates in the country," he said.

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Garcia told: Help consumers, urge gov't to drop gas tax

By Abigail L. Ho

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO HELP the consumers, join our campaign.

Federico Lopez, president and chief executive officer of First Gas Power Corp., issued the invitation to Government Service Insurance System president and general manager Winston Garcia, who has blamed the high electricity rates on, among others, charges, Meralco's "trillion-peso sweetheart deals" with First Gas, a related company.

Garcia, who sits on the board of Manila Electric Co., had vowed to bring power rates down 10 to 20 percent when the state pension fund takes over management of Meralco.

The Lopez-led First Gas owns and operates the two independent power producers (IPPs) that supply electricity to Meralco—the 1,000-megawatt (MW) Sta. Rita and 500-MW San Lorenzo gas-fired power plants.

"If Mr. Garcia is sincere in his wanting to lower power rates for Meralco consumers, we would like to invite him to join us in this advocacy to remove the government-imposed taxes on our natural gas," said Lopez in a statement.

LOPEZ

"We have been saying for the longest time that if the government wants to seriously reduce power rates, it can readily do this through the removal of the unfair royalties on natural gas. We are the only country left that penalizes its own consumers for using its own indigenous natural gas," he said.

He explained that of the P4.36 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) that First Gas charged Meralco, up to P1.79 per kWh went to the government in royalties.

"First Gas' power will [cost only] P2.37 per kWh if the royalty tax of P1.79 per kWh is removed, Clearly, it] by far one of the cheapest in the country" he said.

"Royalties and taxes account for about half of the natural gas price. Reducing these components will translate the benefits of developing natural gas directly from the government to the consumers through lower electricity prices," he said.

Lopez said the increased use of natural gas would still provide economic benefits to the country even if the government should decide to scrap the high royalty taxes slapped on it.

"These benefits would come in the form of foreign exchange savings from forgone oil importation, he said.

Garcia had earlier said he would push for the cancellation of Meralco's "trillion-peso sweetheart deals" with First Gas, which he called "the mother of all sweetheart deals."

Kids learn media, other skills from int'l anti-violence group

TO ENLARGE MORE children in media and be able to create anti- production units even in poor communities, Plan International partnered with Ateneo TV now for summer in train up to 200 youths aged 9 to 17 in photography and audio and video production.

Plan International advocates for schools free of corporal punishment, bullying, discrimination, peer pressure and other forms of aggression through its units throughout Asia, as presented in the United Nations Study on Violence against Children.

The first and brightest 40 children from the workshops held in Occidental Mindoro, Manduriao, Antique, Leyte and Cebu were flown in Manila for an advance media skills training now going on at the Soles Global Culture Center in Tagaytay City.

In the five-day advanced course, the students will be taught the rudiments of making public service announcements, investigative video documentaries and various stages of radio/TV production.

Trainers are multi-talented TV director Lemuel Garrellano, Rodyvig Reyes news manager Allan Silvestre and Ateneo TV secretary general Maj Cisa Hufol.

Plan International also organized a global youth summit called Young Minds Project through its units in the Philippines, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand, where a media activist will be staged.

The best products of Young Heroes in the Philippines will be announced in a national festival in October and will be broadcast in the mainstream media as works by, by and about children. Outstanding works will be fielded by Ateneo TV in international competitions as official Philippine entries.

More info on the project can be obtained at philippines.plan-international.org and pbearts.org.

THESE YOUNGSTERS learn how to set up a video camera in the training conducted by Plan International and Ateneo TV over the summer.

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ENROLLMENT IS NOW GOING ON * NO TUITION FEE INCREASE

Sharpest hike yet for fuel–₱1.50/liter

By Abigail L. Ho

AS THE PESO DOLLAR CONTINUED TO push oil prices higher in the world market, local oil firms passed the burden on to consumers by pushing up gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices by the highest level yet of ₱1.50 per liter.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. raised its prices at 12:01 a.m. yesterday, followed by Petron Corp., Chevron Philippines Inc., Total Philippines Corp., Unocal Philippines Inc. and Eastern Petroleum Corp. at 6 a.m.

Total also increased the price of its liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) by ₱1.35 a kilogram, which includes the 12-percent value-added tax (VAT).

All the firms cited the sharply escalating price of oil in the world market as the reason for the increase, the 12th since the start of the year.

According to data from the Department of Energy, the regional benchmark Dubai crude skyrocketed to an all-time average of $119.46 a barrel from April's $103.41 a barrel.

The increase from April to May of more than $16 a barrel represented the single biggest month-to-month jump in the Dubai crude price.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products soared to an average of $130.92 a barrel in the May 1-30 period from $110.26 a barrel last month.

Diesel surges, too

MOPS-based diesel surged to an average of $141.23 a barrel in the first 30 days of May from the April average of $141.90 a barrel.

The international contract price of LPG also rose to $855.50 per metric ton (MT) in May from $812 per MT the month before.

According to the DOE's oil price monitoring for the week of May 26-31, the price cielo at the Petit Texas International... the US benchmark... result-ed in a spike in the Dubai crude price by $5 a barrel and in MOPS unleaded gasoline and diesel prices by around $7 a barrel.

The WTI price rally was led in part by the US Energy Information Agency's report of an unexpected decline in US crude oil and gasoline inventories by 5.4 million barrels to 320.9 million barrels and by 800,000 barrels to 209.4 million barrels.

Can rise be stopped?

"With gas and oil prices setting new records on a daily basis, many international analysts are beginning to wonder whether anything can stop prices from rising," the DOE monitoring stated.

"There are technical signals in the futures market, including price differences between near-term and longer-term contracts, that could may soon tell. But with demand for oil growing in the developing world, and little real in sight to supply problems in producing countries such as Nigeria, few analysts are willing to roll an end to crude's rally," it added.

Analysts and investors also believed the US dollar's continued decline over the past year had been the most significant factor behind the increases in oil prices.

Since the start of the year, gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices have risen 11 times for a total of ₱9.50 per liter for gasoline and ₱10 a liter for diesel and kerosene.

The latest adjustment brings the price of premium unleaded gasoline to between ₱59.07 and ₱59.15 a liter, diesel to between ₱42.91 and ₱48, and kerosene to between ₱48.30 and ₱50.80, inclusive of the 12-percent VAT.

New poverty threshold set at P10,000 in NCR

By Michelle V. Rosco

THE MINIMUM AMOUNT THAT A FAMILY of five living in the National Capital Region should earn nowadays to stay out of poverty is at least ₱10,000 a month, or over 18 percent more than what was required two years ago, according to the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB).

The estimated income threshold only covers basic needs like food, clothing, shelter and transportation. It does not include spending for recreation and emergencies.

The findings have increased fears that more families would fall below the poverty line.

According to the NSCB, the new estimated income threshold takes into account the latest increase in fuel prices.

NSCB's ₱10,000 estimate is up 18.7 percent from the ₱8,349 recorded in 2006.

NSCB said, however, that the latest estimated income threshold was preliminary, as the official figures would be determined in 2009. Poverty surveys are conducted every three years, the last time in 2006.

"Consumer prices have increased by double-digit levels from 2006 to 2008. The cost of rice alone has risen 50 percent," NSCB director general Romulo Virola said in a phone interview.

Virola said that if the average income of Filipino families did not increase commensurate with the income threshold, the poverty incidence could worsen.

The NSCB earlier reported that 26.9 percent of Filipino families were poor in 2006. The government set a target of reducing the figure to 23 percent by 2010, but new economic pressures may double on the attainability of the goal.

Augusto Santos, director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, earlier said the government might consider revising the poverty reduction target because the rising prices of oil and commodities have made the goal unrealistic.

Santos also said the government was thinking of ways to help Filipinos cope with inflation, such as by spending more on social services.

The Department of Finance said last week the government was meeting the goal of a balanced budget this year, or 2010. The government now expects to post a deficit of ₱75 billion, given its plan to spend more.

The DOF and economic managers decided to spend ₱93.6 billion more than the approved national budget of ₱1.226 trillion this year.

Some ₱15.6 billion to add to total spending will be covered by revenues from VAT on oil. The DOF said the balance of ₱75 billion will be covered by loan savings, which will result in a budget deficit.

Some of the additional social services being considered include the granting of cash to selected poor families.

Virola, however, has expressed reservations over the prudence of granting direct cash to the poor. He said what is needed to get people out of poverty is regular sources of income.

Jeepney drivers want ₱2.50 more

WITH THE STEEPEST RISE YET IN FUEL prices, jeepney groups are now seeking a ₱2.50 increase in the minimum fare.

Transport policy list group 1-UTAK, whose members count more than 90 percent of the country's jeepney and bus drivers, had a standing petition to the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board for a ₱1.50 hike in the minimum fare for the first four kilometers and ₱1.75 for each succeeding kilometer from the current ₱7.25.

The group amended its petition after fuel prices rose by their highest level per of ₱1.50 per liter over the weekend.

"We are asking for a provisional increase of ₱2.50 so that no driver goes to hunger. This was prompted by the increases in the pump price (of diesel) to the ₱44 per liter level. When we filed the original petition the pump price was only ₱36.46," 1-UTAK president Figar Mendoza told the Inquirer in a text message.

The amended petition is now with the LTFRB, which recently allowed jeepneys and buses to impose a provisional increase of 50 centavos, bringing fare to ₱9 from ₱7.50.

If 1-UTAK's amended petition for a ₱2.50 fare hike is approved, passengers would need to shell out only ₱1 more since the increase would include the 50-centavo provisional hike in effect since May 21. Alan F. Ochoveda

Behind bars, convicts ...

From page A1

J. Manila as Comelec's 2.

"Friends were initially concerned," said Quiñones. "They were afraid that some of my clients might act like the idea of me collaborating with prisoners. On the contrary my customers were amazed when they learned about it."

Only too happy

Maxine Hu Raymond, a former waitress who only too happy to see on TV their handiwork being seen by celebrities like Kris Aquino, Bea Alonzo, Aiai and Us Girls Angel Aquino, Iya Villania and Chesca Farida.

Since most of their mates are on appeal, a number of inmates asked this writer not to give their last names.

"I almost hugged the TV when I saw the Us Girls wearing our pieces," said Raymond. "I haven't felt so happy in a long while."

The remarks, however, go beyond instilling a renewed sense of pride in them. Fellow inmate Josefa, a former billboard artist, also values the modest income he earns from working with Quiñones.

Like a number of cons pining inmates who still manage to earn money behind bars, Josefa is now able to provide some form of financial support for his family.

"Most of my income goes to my children's tuition as well as household expenses," he said. "The rest I keep for myself to buy food."

Eager to learn

Aside from bringing down food, Quiñones also carries a small suitcase filled with bottles of textile paint and HTV pieces for his collaborators to work on.

In lieu of canvases, inmates work on his finished clothes with textile paint in their mothers.

"Curiosity to what you would expect, these guys are very disciplined and eager to learn," he said.

It wasn't always like this, at first, Quiñones was a bit reluctant to heed the prison board Lands of God (LOG) Foundation's invitation for him to conduct creative and self-help workshops for inmates.

Talented prisoners

Led by inmates Warren Zinggoot and Mike Abit, one of the foundation's objectives is to develop programs to keep prisoners occupied and productive by harnessing their talents and teaching them useful skills in various fields like music, baking, selling, painting, writing and photography.

While the help of its outside contacts, LOG has always been on the lookout for experts in different fields who are willing to conduct free workshops for the inmates.

It was during one of these workshops that Mitch met volunteer Andy Medardo, a photographer who also happens to be Quiñones' friend.

"I asked Andy if he knows anybody who can do workshops on tailoring and dressmaking," said Alvin. "He thought of Pauy, and told us to invite him."

Medardo told his nephew of LOG's invitation. It took a bit of persuasion before Quiñones agreed.

Giving back

A fearful Quiñones first entered the congested interdition but pass. The thought of conversing with convicted murderers, rapists, robbers, drug pushers and kidnappers suddenly seized him. He wanted to back out.

"I've always been afraid of prisoners and prison life," he said. "I was probably able to muster enough courage because I really wanted to overcome this fear. This is also my way of giving back to society."

Quiñones' concerns, it turned out, were unfounded. Even before the first meeting was over, he realized that most of the inmates were really well-behaved and eager to please.

"Some of these inmates haven't had any visits from their loved ones for years," said Alvin. "That's why we welcome everyone, especially someone as accomplished as Pauy to spend some time with us."

Known for wearing outrageous outfits, including "men's skirts," the openly gay Quiñones has yet to experience being jeered or inside the all-male compound.

Beading and sewing

Normally, I feel much safer inside than I do outside," he said. "It was my decision not to wear skirts and to remain as low-key as possible during my visits."

Quiñones supervises his workers, but he gives them a free hand to do whatever they want. He assigns lesser talents to tune and do bead work for fish lines of bags.

"I really wanted to teach them how to make clothes at first," he said. "Although there are a number of tailors in the compound, it was impossible to work with them because they don't have sewing machines."

When inmates first heard of the workshop, the compound's gay population predictably turned out in full force. More than half of the initial batch of participants were gay, said Quiñones.

The weirder, the better

Acutely aware of the sexual work, however, he sent a drastic shift, with straight men making up majority of the class. Three days, there are only three openly gay workshop participants.

Despite working with a team of gifted artists, Quiñones had to spend some time conducting lectures and convincing them with ideas and glossy magazines before actual work could begin.

By giving them weekly assignments, he was able to gauge their individual talents. Soon enough, his students started thinking outside the box.

"I always remind them to work on stuff that would sell," he said.

Typical images from prisoners such as Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Iron girls, doves, skull and crossbones and bleeding hearts won't do anymore.

"For Pauy, the weirder the drawing, the better," said Josefa. "Once we hear him say the words 'I love it' as he goes through our work, we know we're on the right track."

Lanao villagers get ...

From page A1

"Nakakapag-discover na sila ngayon! Dito I can take a shower!)," said a giddy Violeta Mascuyo, wife of the barangay chair here.

In the past, residents here collected rain waters or used the services of water tanker who delivered water on household. Some residents even recycled their bath water.

Now that the village has its own water supply system, residents have individual faucets to get their water from a newly constructed tank.

Barangay Cinabo is just one of 239 poor villages in the central Mindanao provinces of Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat now enjoying the instant yields of a seven-year community empowerment program jointly funded by the European Union (EU), Department of Agrarian Reform, provincial and municipal government units, and people's organizations.

Raising self-reliance

The P1.3-billion program called Support to Agrarian Reform Communities in Central Mindanao (STARCM), a framework among residents here since 2001, wrapped up on May 20 with villagers showcasing their investment gains in the last seven years.

The STARCM, a collaborative among the EU, local agrarian reform officers, local and barangay leaders, nongovernmental organizations and residents, undertook some 383 projects among "the poorest of the poor" farming households in Central Mindanao to raise "self-reliance, living standards and quality of life."

Project officers counted more than 68,000 farmers who were directly benefited around the region as beneficiaries of the infrastructures, agricultural production and enterprise and rural finance projects that STARCM pursued from 2001 to the present.

It was designed to help residents handle development roadblocks, among them "inadequate or degrading rural infrastructure, low levels of agricultural productivity, weak or nonexistent farmers' organizations and limited access to credit services," said STARCM Component co-director Elpius Balon.

The STARCM received more than $6 per cent funding from the EU.

The program was part of Europe's efforts to push for sustainable development and peace in Mindanao, said Monica Macovei, Brussels-designated head of the European Commission, the EU's executive body.

"Without peace, there can be no prosperity and the people of the Philippines can never take advantage of the tremendous economic, agricultural and industrial potential which Mindanao has to offer," said Macdonald.

Macdonald, EC Manila operations head Roger de Backer and Belgium Ambassador to Manila Wesley Gheuglin visited project sites here, receiving stellar thank-you's from the beneficiaries of EU's generous allocations.

As Lanao del Norte Gov. Khalid Dimaporo told an audience of local officials at the provincial capitol here: "We are not blessed when it comes to natural government funding because ARMM (Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao) is prioritized. But so many countries have been offering to help. Let's show them that we deserve their help."

In Lanao del Norte, 11 of the most impoverished towns received P218 million which was invested in water systems, farm-to-market roads, health centers, crop cultivation training, farm machinery and fattening animals such as carabaos and horses.

Water, crops, roads

Barangays Candis and Barakanan now have their own water cooperatives run by trained village officials. Water supply is available—some in communal tap stands, many in individual taps—to a combined 486 households in the Talitol villages. Residents pay P1.00 monthly for the average 10 cubic meters (13,000 liters), a relief from having to pay waterboys P7 per gallon.

In nearby Barangay Carmagan, there is a mini processing plant which residents use to produce vinegar from coconuts. Other residents used bananas and cassava in their lots.

"It's added income for me. I used to just stay in the house but now I attend to my lot," said 60-year-old Lizie Salicona, a mother of three.

Farmers in Tangkal town, one of the province's most interior villages, are grateful for the new 6.7-kilometer road which allows them to bring their produce to the market in 40 minutes. It used to be a rough two-day commute on motorcycle or horseback.

Tangkal Mayor Abdul Aziz Buringcla, a former Moro rebel commander, said taking up arms was the farthest thing from the minds of his constituents.

"Before, there was a lot of conflict here because of poverty. But now they have become peace-minded. Life is easier because residents have easy access to the commodity. I've convinced them not to think of war and just concentrate on working for development," he said.

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CBCP sees Pope approving modified foods vs hunger

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A CATHOLIC BISHOP YESTERDAY EXpressed optimism Pope Benedict XVI would issue this month a statement taking a favorable stance toward the use of biotechnology to address world hunger.

In a statement posted on the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) website, Malolos Bishop Jose Oliveros, CBCP Episcopal Commission on Bioethics chair, said the Vatican is set to release its statement in early July.

Oliveros pointed out the Vatican had been reserved on the issue, but could be swayed by scientific evidence of biotechnology's safety and its potential to solve world hunger.

The CBCP, at present, is against the use of biotechnology.

Biotechnology includes the field of genetic engineering, or the manipulation of plant or animal reproduction processes to suit a desired result such as increased output or pest resistance. Genetically modified (GMO) food products, however, have sparked controversy among environmental activists and religious groups who are against any attempt to tamper with nature.

"Reports said the concern of the Holy Father was the fact that there were millions of people who cannot eat food hungry every night. So how do we solve the question of hunger? Biotechnology gives us an answer," the Malolos bishop said in the statement.

He said the use of biotechnology would not contravene man's nature "because we are created by God with a mind that can improve nature."

Nevertheless, he said that even with the assumption of the possible acceptance of biotechnology the Church's concern as the safety and proper regulation of biotechnology products would remain.

Oliveros previously expressed his willingness to dialogue with advocates and stakeholders of biotechnology and invited all concerned organizations, including groups against biotechnology to join the discussion.

Last week, the Malolos bishop met with officials of the Department of Agriculture Biotechnology Program Office to discuss updates on the agency's projects.

The Vatican's support for biotechnology would be a major boost to advocates of GMO technology who claim that it can help secure the world's food supply by increasing crop yield.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, June 1, 2008
9th Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: (Ps 11:1-8, 26-28, 34)

Deuteronomy 11:18, 26-28

Impress these words of mine on your heart and in your soul, bind them on your hand as a sign, and keep them always before your eyes.

See, this day I set before you a blessing and a curse: a blessing if you obey the commandments of Yahweh that I command you today; a curse if you disobey these commandments and turn aside from the way that I charge you now, to follow strange gods which are not yours.

And be careful to carry out all the laws and precepts which I now set before you.

2nd Reading: Rom 3:21-25, 28

Now it has been revealed altogether apart from the law, and was already foretold in the law and the Prophets, God makes us righteous by means of faith in Jesus Christ, and this is applied to all who believe, without distinction of persons, because all have sinned and all fall short of the Glory of God, and all are graciously forgiven and made righteous through the redemption effected in Christ Jesus. We find that given him to be the victim whose blood atones so forgiveness through faith.

So we hold that people are in God's grace by faith and not because of all the things we do under the Law.

Gospel: Mt 7:21-27

Not everyone who says to me 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my heavenly Father. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not speak in your name? Did we not cast out devils and perform many miracles in your name?' Then I will tell them openly: I have never known you; away from me, you evil people!

'So, then, anyone who hears these words of mine and acts accordingly is like a wise man, who built his house on rock. The rain poured, the rivers flooded, and the wind blew and struck that house, but it did not collapse because it was built on rock.' But anyone who hears these words of mine and does not act accordingly, is like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain poured, the rivers flooded, and the wind blew and struck that house; it collapsed, and what a terrible fall that was!'

Commentary:

Notice that the house built upon rock was subjected to the very same wind and rain that would affect the house built upon sand. The difference between the two houses would be in their foundations.

In the same way, the followers of Jesus cannot expect to be spared the inevitable tempests and storms that are part of the human condition. The winds will blow and the rains will come! Being rooted in the firm foundation of faith, hope and charity will make all the difference in the world. May we never stray from the One who makes us strong.

Clarisse Constantino Bondoc, Sr. J
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Corruption, weak rule of law roots of RP problems –US

DESPITE A LONG TRADITION OF democracy, the Philippines remains "vulnerable to political turmoil, recurring attempts to use unconstitutional means to resolve leadership crises, human rights abuses and concerns about overall stability of elections," according to a United States state department report.

In "Advancing Freedom and Democracy Report 2008" released on May 23, the US Department of State said corruption and weak rule of law continued to be the underlying factors exacerbating this vulnerability.

Serious problems

It said that while the Philippine government generally respected the human rights of its people, there continued to be serious problems in certain areas, particularly extrajudicial killings (EJKs) and forced disappearances.

In 2007 the government intensified its efforts to investigate and prosecute these cases, and there has been a significant decrease in the number of killings and disappearances, the report stated.

It said high voter turnout in the 2007 national and local elections, which was cited by observers and local officials, demonstrated the country's continuing commitment to the democratic process as 99 percent of the 37,000 seats available nationwide were filled without controversy.

Active role

It recommended civil society monitoring groups in the country for playing an active role as poll watchers to ensure fairer election exercises.

To counter these problems, the report said, US-funded programs currently support civil society initiatives that increase election-related, allow NGOs to monitor campaign finances in selected electoral contests and media reporting, and assist electoral modernization efforts in preparation for local and national elections.

It said the US Embassy in Manila is coordinated and deployed a multi-agency team of 86 American officials to observe the May 2007 national elections, an initiative that clearly demonstrated to the Philippine electorate the US government's strong support of a free and fair democratic process.

"The Philippines has struggled with EJKs and forced disappearances for most of the modern history. US government officials on every opportunity to convey the message that these killings and disappearances must cease and must be thoroughly investigated and prosecuted," the report said.

Other points

In support of this priority, assistance providers are "endeavoring to build the capacity of journalists to report credibly, accurately and professionally on human rights violations, to strengthen the justice sector's effectiveness in prosecuting cases of extrajudicial killings and disappearances, and to professionalize the security forces, the report said.

Other points the paper underscore:

The US government also provides assistance to law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and the courts to investigate, prosecute and transfer human rights abusers and to devise strategies to prevent future abuses.

To encourage respect for due process among members of the armed forces, various US military assistance programs help to strengthen the professionalism, commitment to human rights and discipline of the Philippine military. Cynthia D. Balana

US to remain in Asia, assures defense chief

SINGAPORE—THE United States will not disengage from Asia despite growing political and military concentration in the Middle East, the US defense chief said Saturday.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates also dismissed Beijing's (Myanmar) ruling generals as a security menace in Singapore by noting "tens of thousands of lives" by thwarting the international community's attempts to help survivors of devastating Cyclone Nargis.

"The threat who worry that Iraq and Afghanistan have distracted the United States from Asia and developments here, I would counter that we have never been more engaged with more (Asian) countries," Gates told the Shangri-La Dialogue.

Fears

His comments were aimed at allaying fears by some in the region that US military and political concentration in the Middle East will pull it away from Asia, and that a weak US economy will force the next US administration little time and inclination to strengthen ties in the region.

US interests in Asia "will endure no matter which political party occupies the White House next year," said Gates at the annual meeting of defense ministers and military officials, which is organized by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

One participant expressed concern that with growing economic uncertainty, the US may not be able to afford its huge presence in Asia—including military bases in the Philippines, Japan and South Korea and a massive naval deployment in the Pacific Ocean.

Pressures

"There are enormous budgetary pressures building up in the United States," said Richard Michael Bullock, a Singapore's diplomat. "At some point, the US electorate will ask, 'Why do we need to have such a sizable military presence in Asia?'"

Although US military engagement among some in Asia, many governments feel a US presence is crucial—not only as protection from non-state threats, but to maintain the military strength of China and the nuclear threat posed by North Korea.

Not just military

Gates said the US role in Asia was not just about its military.

The United States is to the region "as an ally, partner and friend," offering a range of nonmilitary help such as humanitarian relief after the cyclone in Myanmar and earthquake in China.

In response to a question after the speech, Gates rejected the suggestion that US foreign policy was contradictory because it offered the carrot to Myanmar's repressive regime to console its nuclear program but wielded only the stick against Burma's ruling generals.

Neither Myanmar, Burma, has shown an interest in talking to the US, Gates said. AP

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Underground river moving closer to top 7

Front page A1

At the choice list of 77 natural wonders spread across the world, the others two Philippine nominees, the Chocolate Hills of Bohol and Mayon Volcano in Albay, ranked 5th and 11th, respectively.

Hagedorn said the phenomenal rise in the global popularity of the Palawan attractions had aroused among the province's residents a greater sense of protectiveness over their natural resources.

He said the people were now saying he themselves the result of the local leadership's painstaking efforts to promote and develop ecotourism.

Even then, Puerto Princesa could not as yet consider itself perennial as a magnet for foreign tourists, the mayor said.

The reasons for this include the chaotic state of its airport, the substandard road in the underground river, which is 75 km from the city center, and the shortage of accommodations.

Hagedorn said that while Puerto Princesa had not yet started any promotional activities in how for eign tourists, he was hoping that visual information now like an upgraded airport and paved access roads to caves in attractions would be in place by 2010.

The airport terminal is now being renovated while a planned renovation of the airport runway to accommodate bigger aircraft like Boeing 747s has been scheduled.

The completion of these projects would depend on the commitment of the national government to provide the necessary funds, said Hagedorn.

Puerto Princesa has only about 1,200 rooms, ranging from budget to first-class, barely enough to accommodate the 176,000 visitors it receives each year. 15 percent of whom are foreign tourists.

Miss Cabra, a former tourism secretary who attended the two-day Southern Luzon Area Business Conference that ended here last Friday, said Palawan had just around 200 first-class rooms although another 300 more were expected soon.

Cabra, president of the Philippine Small and Medium Business Development Foundation, said Palawan had made much headway in tourism in the past decade.

But she hoped the province would maintain the path of slow development, unlike the popular resort island of Boracay in Aklan.

The Philippine contenders for Seven Wonders honors are facing tough rivals, led by Hawaii's Diamond Head.

Like Palawan, Ha Long Bay boasts numerous limestone karsts—a terrain marked by sinks, ridges, pseudokarst rocks, caverns and underground streams—and islets of various shapes and sizes.

Ranked No. 2 in the trip of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, which has one of the world's longest natural sandy beaches, at 120 kilometers, including mud flats.

Tubbataha Reef is ahead of the mystic 2,310 km long Ganges River (No. 4), which flows through the plains of northern India into Bangladesh.

The Chocolate Hills at No. 8 in the contenders the Amazon River (No. 6) which flows through the countries Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru without a single bridge crossing it.

Puerto Princesa's famed underground river ranks just below Nepal's Mount Everest (No. 7), the world's tallest peak.

Mayon Volcano rivals Japan's iconic and symmetrical but dormant Mount Fuji (No. 9) and Costa Rica's Cocos Island National Park (No. 10) whose surrounding waters abound with humongous sharks, rays and dolphins.

The New 7 Wonders of Nature poll is a project of the New7Wonders Foundation, a Swiss-based nonprofit organization that was also behind the previous seven-year online search for the New 7 Wonders of the World.

The New 7 Wonders of Nature search began on July 7, 2007, the same day the results of the New 7 Wonders of the World poll were announced.

The online search can be compared to the American idol singing contest which has voting by the public at large and by an expert panel.

The 77 official nominees—which topped an initial batch of more than 200—will be eligible for consideration by the New7Wonders of Nature panel of experts for inclusion in the group of 21 finalists.

The initial round of online voting ends on Dec. 31, after which the panel will for the final 21, from which another round of online voting will determine the final seven.

In a posting on the foundation's website, New7Wonders founder and president Bernard Weber said age and not the size of the population was the biggest factor in determining the winners in the previous search for the world's greatest man-made structures, the New 7 Wonders of the World.

The New 7 Wonders of the World, announced on July 7, 2007, are: The Chichen Itza pyramids of Mexico; the Christ the Redeemer statue of Brazil; the Colosseum in Rome, Italy; the Taj Mahal tomb in India; the Great Wall of China; the ancient ruins of Petra in Jordan; and the Machu Picchu ruins of Peru.

Weber said the people of China and India, the world's most populous nations, did not play the most weighty role in choosing the New 7 Wonders.

"They did not represent the largest group of voters—the children and young people of our world-old," he said.

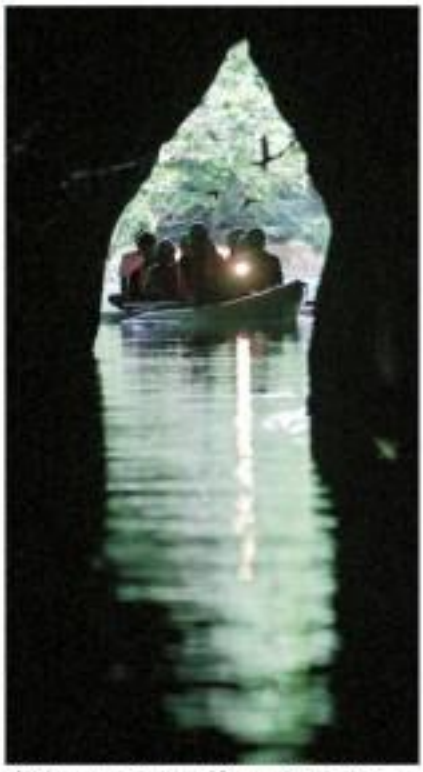
"For the first time ever, children could participate in a global election," he said.

While all countries have children, young ones up to a certain age do not have a strong sense of national pride, as they were our most objective voters, they voted for what they genuinely liked best, said Weber.

He said the online poll proved false the prediction that only the rich Western world and developed countries would dominate the list-making.

Weber said it was the people in the developing world who were much more enthusiastic to join the search, seeing that people in developing societies are the listeners old. Recently from "far in the Western, northern world of plenty."

"For them, it is the gateway to contact with the rest of the world. In our so-called privileged, developed world, the listeners is often used to stiff, clue and/or economic concern," he said.



VISITORS prepare to explore Puerto Princesa's Subterranean River National Park.

Soft drinks firm loses ₱1.7M to biker-thieves

MANILA POLICEMEN ARE hunting five men who grabbed ₱1.7 million in cash from employees of a soft drinks distributor in Tondo, Manila, on Saturday afternoon.

Employees Isaura Millada, Marilou Galleon, Alex Gandlao and Christopher Lizamaig, all of Everything Intrade Distributor, were in the Manila Police District (MPD) and robbery unit to report the robbery which occurred at 2:30 p.m. at the corner of Dagupan and Rizalinda streets in Tondo.

Millada, the firm's cashier, said four to five motorcycle-riding men blocked their path. One of the suspects approached the victims' Toyota Revo and grabbed the duffel bag containing the money.

The robbers, some of them wearing baseball caps, went around with high-powered guns, the police said.

Investigation showed the employees had just finished collecting the day's receipts from the distributor's outlets when the robbery struck.

Gallenit engaged one of the suspects in a Tae Kyde but was punched, police said.

The victims told police they were on their way to deposit the money in the Banco de Oro branch at SM San Lazaro, also in Manila.

Elmer G. Sarmiento

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NAKAGAGSEGURO GAMOT NY LASING BAGO

Dahil sa Inyong Pagtangkilik

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Anniversary Raffle Promo
March 1 - July 31, 2008

Promo Mechanics

How to Join:
1) For Every ₱400.00 single purchase (cash or credit card) in any Mercury Drug stores nationwide, customers are entitled to one (1) raffle coupon.
2) Customer must write legible his/her complete name, address, tel. no. cede, telephone number/s and signature on the front/back of the raffle coupon and drop it in the designated drop boxes located at all Mercury Drug stores nationwide.

Promo Rules:
1) Promo period starts on March 1 and ends on July 31, 2008.
2) Nationwide raffle draw will be held simultaneously at four regions (Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao) on Aug. 11, 29 (for) 2008 with the presence of DENR/BSD representatives.
3) Deadline for the submission of customer's raffle entries shall be on July 31, 2008 at the closing hour of each Mercury Drug store except for all 24 hour operations which is at 11:00 midnight. Late submission of raffle entries is automatically disqualified.
4) All Prizes are tax paid and not convertible in cash.
5) Winners whose name are drawn more than once during the particular draw shall be awarded the prize with higher value.
6) Names of winners will be published in major newspapers nationwide. They will also be notified either by mail, telegram, text message, or telephone as to when and where they will claim their prizes.
7) To claim the prize, winners must present any valid identification cards (Driver's license/SSS/GSIS/Passport/School/Company IDs) and the raffle ticket/s claim stub.
8) Prizes not claimed within 1(60) days after the announcement of winners in the newspapers or after the notification will be forfeited in favor of Mercury Drug Corporation upon approval from DENR/BSD.
9) Employees of Mercury Drug Corporation and its subsidiaries, its advertising agency its commissioned persons, including their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity and or affinity are disqualified from joining the raffle promo.
10) Raffle coupons have no serial numbers but have security watermarks approved by BSD.

Promotional Period	Draw Date	Regional Draw	Place of Draw	Prizes		Special Draw
				Major	Consolation	
March 1 to July 31, 2008	Aug 11, 29, 2008 (Friday)	Metro Manila	Mercury Drug Corporation Accredited Outlet, Manila	1 Winner 2008 MMC Fuzion GLS	10 Winners 2008 MMC Fuzion GLS	63 Winners (one) Accredited Outlet/s in Metro Manila per ₱50,000 each
		Luzon Branch/es	Mercury Drug Corporation Accredited Outlet, Angeles City	1 Winner 2008 MMC Fuzion GLS	10 Winners 2008 MMC Fuzion GLS	
		Visayas Branch/es	Mercury Drug Corporation Accredited Outlet, Cebu City	1 Winner 2008 MMC Fuzion GLS	10 Winners 2008 MMC Fuzion GLS	
		Mindanao Branch/es	Mercury Drug Corporation Accredited Outlet, General Santos City	1 Winner 2008 MMC Fuzion GLS	10 Winners 2008 MMC Fuzion GLS	
TOTAL NO. OF WINNERS				5 winners	252 winners	63 winners

Special Draw:
One of the highlights will be the SPECIAL DRAW for 63 DENR accredited government and/or non-government (NGOs) Quotable nominees which will receive ₱50,000 each with the total of ₱3,150,000.00. (The lucky winners were taken from the list of Quotable nominees submitted by DENR).

Ave DENR BSD Permit No. 0699 Series of 2008.
* Prizes may vary from actual prizes.

63 The Spirit of Service Continues

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 23 No. 177

OPINION

Quack? Quack!

EDITORIAL

THAT, IN A SENSE, IS ALL THAT PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and George W. Bush will be able to do to what must inevitably be killed as a turnout of lame ducks. To believe that it will be anything more than a lame-duck "quackfest" would be to succumb to the political quackery of the official propagandists of both nations. Mr Arroyo's trip to Washington and New York is primarily a lobbying trip, an effort to buttress her sagging reputation by finding a way to appear to bring home some bacon.

That bacon, she hopes, will be in the form of a tangible effect of her lobbying on the prospects of the Filipino Veterans Equity Act. It was his irritation over American congressional inaction on the Filipino veterans' benefits that originally drove Diosdado Macapagal to move Philippine Independence Day from July 4 to June 12. It would be of great personal as well as political meaning for her to claim partial credit for the US Congress' inching closer to fulfilling its moral obligation to our veterans.

The Arroyo-Bush lame-duck summit will also mark the end of a relationship that began with great promise—and great priorities—marked by George W. Bush's state visit to the Philippines and Ms Arroyo's return state visit to the United States in the days when she leaped state to the bandwagon of the "Coalition of the Willing." This relationship was transformed into a more ambiguous détente between the American and Philippine chief executives after her patently disobedience of this alliance sowed all future prospects of mass graves and forces from Washington.

Washington needed her as essentially free rein in Mindanao, and as essentially hands-off policy toward the Arroyo administration—except when it intervened to preserve martial law by sending John Negroponte to Manila in 2005. Thereafter, the Philippines has been more agnostic what it sees after the wishfulness of American haters: yet another insignificant Third World backwater corruption—and not particularly effectively—for American morales. (Ms Arroyo's then-tried to pursue Chinese aid and assistance to compensate for her failed bid for Washington's affections, but that policy, too, has stalled in the midst of controversies surrounding how this aid was secured and spent.)

It's just as well that the summit of the lame ducks is what it is, a less-and-sympathy huddle between two presidents who've alienated their respective peoples and each other. The hatreds of both are tied in what they can commit to each other, though Ms Arroyo would be marginally more important, in that her final lame-duck months straddle the end of the Bush era and the beginning of whatever comes next.

Yet the biggest problem both sides face is that it is highly uncertain whether either chief executive could make an impact on the election of their successor. Even if they could—Bush helps elect John McCain and Ms Arroyo manages to swing the 2010 elections for a sympathetic or obliging candidate—Ms Arroyo's alienation of the Republican establishment would be an albatross around the succeeding Philippine administration's neck.

It will be more interesting to see if Ms Arroyo can manage to demonstrate a capacity to get a sympathetic hearing from the Democratic Party's powers-that-be. If the current American opposition party gains power in November this year, it will still be Ms Arroyo's responsibility to try to eke out some sort of a relationship with a new Democratic administration as it puts in place its priorities for a period that will envelop the first few years of the next Philippine administration.

In this effort, she's as handicapped as she is when it comes to the Republicans. If Republicans are contemptuous of the Arroyo administration because of Iraq, the Democrats have been critical of Ms Arroyo's scandalous human rights record. A new Democratic administration will be far less tolerant of a Philippine administration that continues to sanction the shenanigans of a Norberto Gonzales; and if it begins to de-emphasize the war in Iraq, it may begin allocating diplomatic and other resources to hotchpotch Asia, which the Republicans basically ceded to Chinese influence.

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The myth of the perfect Supreme Court

SEPARATE OPINION

Augusto A. Cruz

ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HEROES in this country is the exaltation of the Supreme Court from the political department and its superior responsibility compared to the accommodating availability of the President of the Philippines and Congress in the impeachment electorate and their dependence on its supposed incompetence.

"In the majority of our people, the Supreme Court should be regarded with special deference and even near reverence, removed from the bickerings and even cheapness of the political department with their gaudy courtship of partisan applause and, especially now, the vulgarity, corruption, and idiocy as well, of some of their members.

"You do not see Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno eating without spoon and fork at a barangay lunch like Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo demonstrating democratic equality in the Tatad frontstage or female President Manuel Villar and his colleagues like Manuel Roxas II, Soren Legarda, and Pimble Lacson advertising commercial products (and presumably themselves) on television and probably receiving talent fees like Manny Pacquiao.

"Antonio Trillo starring in an action movie or Lito Lapid referring in the Senate hiatus instead of engaging in a parliamentary debate is now acceptable conduct among lawmakers even as the House of Representatives remains the hotbed of Cabt. bigdogs under her former lieutenant, Jose de Venecia, and how could his late son have become a Pangasinan governor.

In contrast, the Supreme Court is properly reserved and often ignored save for occasional hullabaloos from retired Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban in his column on the other page, except when his former colleagues offer their observations on the latest personal/political faux pas Malacañang is reheat (hey, ever an obnoxious gratitude more demanding than mere consulate-with-fries.

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A MAN WHO confessed to a priest and said: "Bless me Father for I have sinned. Yesterday I stood by the side of an old man and he boarded the bus."

The priest said: "My son, I see nothing sinful about that. In fact, I think what you did...something an old man...is commendable."

"The Father, But's what he also told me, but the truth is that I saw a P100-bill fall down from his pocket, and I suppose on a roof he boarded the bus," said the man.

In today's Gospel (Matthew 7: 21-27) Jesus tells us that doing the will of the Father is the bottom line for entering the Kingdom of Heaven. In other words, it is not our words and declarations that will save us. It is not even the actions that we claim to be doing in God's name, but our obedience to God's will that really matters in God's eyes. Yes, God sees the heart. We can fool others, we can even fool ourselves, but we cannot fool God.

* * *

The problem with many of us is that we build on ourselves. We think that we can rely on our own resources and store our salvation by our good deeds alone. On the other hand, the problem occurs also when we think that we can and should rely on God's grace and mercy alone and do not need to work out our salvation. We must avoid extremes. Not faith alone, not work alone, but both and work will lead us to salvation.

* * *

"God is my co-pilot." I remember reading this message on stickers as a child. But the more I think about it now, after all these years in my life, the right message should be: "I am God's co-pilot." If we still think we are the pilot of our lives, then we have not really grown up and we have not really learned.

* * *

How far simpler life is if only we let God do the driving. Things do get messed up when we insist on being back seat drivers. How peaceful life is if we learned to trust in God more and

More than words

MOMENTS

Fr Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

More than words, it is examples that leave lasting lessons and values on children

less in ourselves. If you feel burdened in life, maybe it is because you are carrying that which is not for you to carry but for the Lord.

* * *

At the end of our pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico last week, I asked our fellow pilgrims where did they consider very important and significant in our trip. A lot of them mentioned the chaplains, or the tour guide, or the pilgrims and then. But one of them said that it was the driver whom he considered important, and rightly so, for it was the driver who brought us to the places we wanted to see, and who brought us safely to our destination, so we go on our "pilgrim way" to life, let us neither forget our "role for granted the Lord who is the way, the truth, and the life.

* * *

Also in this last pilgrimage, we were all struck by the humility of Nanay Rosing who is now 71 years old, and due to deafness. In the pilgrimage, she was a picture of simplicity and humility, she just obeyed what

over her sister instructed her to do and just smiled at anyone who smiled at her. She did not say anything at all, but she said much by her presence and example.

* * *

The sister of Nanay Rosing was another person in the "preacher" by all of us during the pilgrimage. She attended and took care of her older sister with much diligence and devotion. She did not need to talk about love. She just loved. She did not need to talk about God. She showed God. Yet, they say little who love much.

* * *

Some unconscious but value of kindness. At the end of our pilgrimage, one 63-year old local guide told us how touched he was with the acts of kindness and goodness he received from our group. Likewise, he told us how sad, that he was by the unkindness and the joyful fellowship of our group. Yes, words inspire, but examples does and ably.

* * *

Pls ask the Lord today to forgive us for the many times we have knowingly or unknowingly hurt people by our words and examples, and have been the cause and/or the occasion for scandal, instead of showing the Lord, how often have we obscured the Lord? Instead of becoming a bridge to the Lord, how often have we become a wall around the Lord?

* * *

It's back to school once again for the children. Let us remember though that the best lessons are learned from examples. Parents would do well to remember that more than words, it is examples that leave lasting lessons and values on children. Parents, make sure you are leaving behind a solid foundation for your children. Make sure you are building on the Lord, and not just on fleeting, worldly treasures.

* * *

A moment with the Lord.

Lord, remind me that words without love are empty. Amen.

Independent director of Meralco

WITH DUE RESPECT

Artemio V. Panganiban

"WHAT IS AN INDEPENDENT DIRECTOR? POST did your accept the position?" So my friends asked me after media reported my election as one of the two independent directors of Meralco. (The other is retired banker Nicasio I. Alcantara.)

Who may be independents. Since I am already kept busy as independent director in some other firms, I initially hesitated accepting my nomination. I thought the work in Meralco was too stressful for this reason: not only because of the history of the company's business but also because of the high profile accompanying the Lopez group and GMA president Winston Garcia. But I decided to accept in the hope that I could help upbuild good corporate governance, promote the interests of customers, investors and employees, and ultimately, endear electricity rates.

Sec. 38 of the Securities Regulation Code or SRC (Republic Act 8799), which took effect on Aug. 8, 2000, defines an independent director in typical legalese as "a person other than an officer or employee of the corporation, its parents or subsidiaries or any other individual having a relationship with the corporation, which would interfere with the exercise of independent judgment in carrying out the responsibilities of a director." Listed corporations, among others, are required to have at least two independent directors.

Circular 16, Series of 2002, of the Securities and Exchange Commission is a little more explanatory: "a person who, apart from his fees and shareholdings, is independent of management and free from any business or other relationship which could, or could reasonably be perceived to, materially interfere with his exercise of independent judgment in carrying out his responsibilities as a director ..."

Who may not be independents. An independent director should not have any business, professional, or family ties with the corporation and its affiliates, or be related by blood, marriage or employment with any "substantial" shareholder, director, or officer. Thus, an entity or professional advisor of the corporation or its affiliates cannot serve concurrently as its SEC independent director. However, an independent director of one company can be an independent director of a related entity.

The shareholders elect all corporate directors. Most of the time, the major shareholders vote themselves in. But the law mandates the board of directors to protect and promote their corporate and personal interests. Many times, they dominate the board and appoint themselves or their associates as top executives, installing sometimes in soulless lackeys the owners' and the corporation's dependent interests.

Broader duties are classified into voting (or command and non-voting (or preferred), the old: an director are able to run companies that are much larger than their equities or shareholdings. This is especially true of businesses listed in the stock exchange, as well as of banks, investment houses, securities brokers, and other entities that deal with "other people's money."

Selection of independents. To protect the corporation, its creditors, investors and the public and to professionalize corporate governance, the SEC encourages the election of more independent directors than the minimum of two set by law. To assure that only "the best and the brightest" are chosen as independents, this SEC circular set down stringent requirements for their election, like:

1. A nomination committee, created well before the election, pre-screens the qualifications and submits to the SEC and the shareholders the list of nominees, together with their bios.

2. Only the nominees appearing in the final list are eligible for election. No further nominations whether prior to or during the shareholders' meeting are allowed.

3. The chair of the meeting shall inform the shareholders of the mandatory requirement of electing independent directors and shall ensure that they are elected during the meeting. Those so elected as independents cannot be filled by unqualified nominees.

4. In turn, the SEC bars independents from outside business relationships that could hinder their independence.

Because of the rigid requirements of appointment, independents are usually chosen from retired jurists who understand the labyrinths of business, retired bankers, former public officials and corporate executives with solid reputations for competence, probity and independence.

Indeed, while the shareholders elect them, independents are expected to act apart from and at times opposed to the pecuniary interests of the owners. Sometimes, they may need to air views and cast votes opposite those of the shareholders who chose them. They demand moral courage and integrity bordering on martyrdom.

Although the last election for regular Meralco directors was contentious, the one for independents was largely uncontroversial. After prior screening by the Meralco Nomination Committee and the two major shareholders (the Lopez group and the GMA) early this October, Bautista and I were finally nominated and unanimously elected to the two slots.

I believe that this is a tribute not to us but to the two major shareholders who, despite the acrimony that beset the shareholders' meeting, have shown the maturity required for the independent directorship system. In turn, I shall (and I think, Mr. Bautista also) work beyond the current corporate struggle and perform my duties with the independence, integrity and probity expected of me by the law, the shareholders and the public.

* * *

Comments are welcome at jbar@actcorporate@aol.com

Saffron soldiers

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

MAE SOT, THAILAND—DR. MYAWA'S RED ROBE, SIDE-HAIR a white scar behind his left ear. He is the oldest here—old compared to the boys who gather under a thatched roof on a Wednesday afternoon, robes heaped over their shoulders. U O Ba Yin is 53. Ehalt Page division in Burma. He sits on the ground, his legs folded. Imaginary moss marvels along one side of the wooden floor. Saffron colored robes hang on three sides. Outside, where a young monk sings while cleaning fish, the sun is an impossible yellow.

On Sept. 25, 2007, U O Ba Yin walked across Page with 5,000 other monks.

Drowning empty water bottles at the gates of monasteries whose monks' required bellies shaved down. When darkness crept over Page, 70 Burmese monks, led by U O Ba Yin, walked the 80 kilometers to Burma's capital Naypyidaw.

U O Ba Yin pronounces his name with waving hands and signed fingers. The sun burns high in Rangoon. The monks sprang from the gates of their schools, carrying a sword of schoolchildren spilled out of the school gates: a schoolmaster counts the street with a 7-year-old holding on to each elder's hand. There is a rumble, and then a Burmese police truck barrels into the running group. The leather and her tiny changes are killed instantly. The monks who try to pick up the bodies are also killed. The street is empty, void.

U O Ba Yin does not know if the truck's driver intended to kill. He only knows what happened later, when he was beaten until the blood poured out from behind his head. Many rushed out of the school when word spread about the dead students—many more were shot.

"Over 200 people were killed in Sagaing. They couldn't reach downtown so by boating, so they fired."

It is Amida, a 27-year-old monk with gentle cheeks and glasses, who translates the stories into English. Amida was working on his Bachelor of Arts in Religion in a state-owned government university, and one of the student leaders during the 1988 uprising. Teachers who protested academic wife pressured on the street with expulsion.

"Over 200 protested from my university. Many were afraid. I was in my final year as student. Lost my degree, but degree does not matter. More important what I do for the people."

The September 2007 Saffron Revolution rose on the body of state-blame: bird price increases. Monks, whose living depended on donations from people, turned over their begging bowls and refused donations from the government.

"In 2007, people are starving, poor, and sick. Children cannot go to school. Monks are of the people, we cannot watch them suffer."

Businessmen refugees in Thailand say that after the Burmese army enters a village and leave it to the ground, they proceed to kill off the men. Parents send off young boys over the age of 5 to monasteries in the city to protect them from death at the hands of the army or recruitment as child soldiers. Burma's military is 400,000 strong, and the second number is the Buddhist monks with their 500,000 saffron-clad warriors of peace. For many young men, the monastery, and eventually the army, are considered not so much vocations, but means of escape. Burmese villages, especially those held by ethnic minorities, are in constant danger of military assault.

Outside the monastery, monk has finished cleaning his fish, and is hacking it to pieces. There are white earphones shoved into his ears. He tells me he is a fan of Michael Jackson. Someone plays "Legend of the World" by the Carpenters on a plastic cell phone. There is laughter, and voices chanting in requests for Madonna and Avril Lavigne. One monk sits on a mat with a newspaper open on the sports page, forehead creased, eyes on point. He says he is rooting for Manchester United, and Bobby de Jin.

There are many monks who decide to forgo their vocation. "They want to wear regular clothes, meet girls, go to movies," says Bai Bai, a young Burmese graduate student studying in Mae Sot.

The families of these monks do not know where their sons and brothers are. There are nearly 30 monks here in Mae Sot. The youngest is 19. They are not safe, not here, not close to the border. Very soon they will have to find another home. Some have managed to secure travel to the United States.

"Maybe there is another country for us. We can't go back," says 29-year-old Hindaka from Rangoon.

"In our society," says Bai Bai, "the monks stand for the people. They get offerings from the people, and if the people suffer, the monks cannot watch. We are linked, front and back. That is why they must be free."

Amida first wrote from jail to the monastery in February. They took his photograph, he says. He can be arrested at any time, of any crime, without the benefit of court or jail.

Many were killed during the September protests. Bodies wrapped in robes turned white to the sun, and floated on the rivers. Monks were tied in hampers and beaten.

And yet Amida does not believe they lost the fight against a brutal government. The world saw what was happening to their people. For him, it was only a beginning.

"You cannot kill us or lose." The solemnly young monk is angry, until nearly on his feet.

"We win."

* * *

Send comments to pat.evangelista@gmail.com

Experiences of sexual harassment

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE PAST MONTH OR SO WHILE I WAS ON leave, I had been grappling with the issue of sexual harassment, from both a personal and "professional" standpoint.

Personal because a young relative of mine had found herself embroiled in a sexual harassment incident at a corporation. And professional because two other cases came my way about the same time as my relative and her family were grappling with her case. One was by way of text messages and phone calls from one victim who wanted to know what she could do against a persistent boss who was making her life miserable at her music office. While the other was through a phone call from Margie, mother of actor William Martinez, who wanted to know how she could get the support of a women's group because Philbanki's daughter had just filed a case of sexual harassment against the actor before the prosecutor's office.

I'll discuss Patricia Martinez's case first because that has received a fair amount of publicity. First, as has gone public with her story about her unpleasant encounter with a drunk Cesario at a bar and the rough her lawyer filed a case of "lascivious behavior" against the actor. "Lascivious behavior" is a fairly low-level crime in our penal code and this is what Patricia's lawyer had to resort to because the present anti-sexual harassment law does not apply in this case, there being no "superior-subordinate" workplace relationship between Patricia and Cesario.

But that does not diminish the import of Cesario's behavior as Patricia, nor does it excuse Cesario from facing the criminal, civil and moral implications of his behavior.

I'm sure that's the urge that Cesario's home network seized on when it decided to make an issue the actor to any way since the accusation was made. Apparently, the network bosses, including its new women president, accept his explanation that not only was he drunk at the time he made passes and made several suggestions to the young woman, but that he had just come from an acting workshop that day and was playing the role of vampire. That is absurd and stupid, and for the public and the network to accept it as a plausible excuse is scandalous. If every actor who portrays a rapist feels justified to act out his role in real life, then we should have had a slew of complaints by now against, say, Ben Cortez, who is the "favorite" rapist of many actresses, apparently because he knows how to acquit himself in his role without hurting or offending his co-stars.

If Cesario is so vulnerable an actor he needs an act out his workshop assignments on hapless young women, then the network should perhaps refrain from employing him, as he's a danger to his co-workers and to "friends" he pastes with.

* * *

THE OTHER young woman has already filed a case against the foreigner who, according to several here, had a lasting harassment of a different sort from the lawyers of the accused. They have wanted her against releasing her affidavit, which is a public document and is here to do with at the phones.

As in the previous victims, this young woman's chief concern is protecting her privacy while pursuing the case. The legal and administrative system grinds exceeding slow, and Filipino lawyers are particularly adept at delaying procedures until everyone involved, especially the victim, just gives up in frustration.

Another question bothering the young woman is what, exactly, our local laws can do against a foreigner who enjoys some sort of diplomatic status. I'm no lawyer and I advised her to seek legal advice, but I wonder what the foreigner's local (the complainant's) employer is doing in the meantime. Has it bothered to investigate the young woman's complaint at all? Is it not concerned that the foreigner's behavior would affect its image and reputation, since it's engaged in promoting good relations between its country and the Philippines? The answer has close her part and filed a case, but there are other ways to pursue the ends of justice, and an employer could and should. Not to do so, considering, much less encouraging, abusive behavior from a senior, diplomatic personnel is not.

* * *

All his my relative, her case has reached scandalous. The accused, a senior official of a broadcast network, has filed a complaint against her, thus exerting worse that a formal complaint of sexual harassment had been filed against him.

The network reportedly claims that it can do nothing at this point, since the man is no longer an employee. There has been no hearing as yet, and whatever investigation was conducted was cursory at best. Has the case indeed been resolved by the man's resignation?

In the first place, what prevents the network's big bosses, who apparently have been friends with the executive way back, from re-hiring him, say a few months from now, when the heat has died? Executive turnovers in private cable stations from one station employer to another (do I hire?) Many of these entities have kept about for fear of losing their jobs.

After a small blind item appeared in this space about the case, a senior official of the network called me and expressed her fear that this would jeopardize all the legal avenues to investigate and resolve the case. I took him at his word and waited for developments. I now feel duped and used.

But this is nothing compared to what my relative must be feeling. At the very least, she says, she has been vindicated by the decision of the other employer to acknowledge that a strong was done to her. She wants her feelings of violation and betrayed recognized and validated. She wants the company for whom she had worked for a year validating the creative challenges and the talent put upon her, to say: You were a valuable employee and we're sorry this had to happen to you.

Referendum farce in Burma

WORLD VIEW

Vaclav Havel, Desmond Tutu, Richard von Weizsäcker et al.

PRAGUE—THE ENORMOUS SUFFERING OF the Burmese people caused by the recent cyclone, which has caused tens of thousands of deaths, deserves the sympathy of the entire world. But more than sympathy is needed, because the Burmese military junta's incompetence and inhuman opposition are further aggravating the tragic consequences of this natural disaster.

In the midst of the cyclone's devastation, Burma's ruling generals went ahead and held a referendum on a new constitution. But, according to Burma's Constitutional Referendum Act, members of religious organizations, those subject to criminal prosecution, and members of political parties are not permitted to cooperate with the government were barred from voting. Thus, all current and former political prisoners, about 500,000 Buddhist monks, and more than twice as many members of ethnic minority groups living close to the borders were banned from the vote.

Moreover, according to the new constitution that was supposedly "approved" by the "referendum," Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who has never been prosecuted and still remains under house arrest, is barred from standing in the 2010 presidential elections under the pretext that her deceased husband was British. In the world really willing to accept such an absurdity?

We strongly support the Burmese opposition's campaign calling on the country's citizens to reject the constitution, which does not promote human rights, but only reinforces the military's political role. Many democracy activists have been arrested throughout the country. The regime's disingenuous "free" (5-Yes) pollsters participating from convincing the draft constitution; those who dare to challenge the regime face a 20-year prison sentence.

Given the violent suppression of last September's mass demonstrations (the "Saffron Revolution") led by Burma's Buddhist monks, and the constant repression in the country, it is not surprising that the military junta tries to conceal its despair, weakness in pseudo-democratic electorates such as the sham electoral process of the referendum.

Sadly, the international community did not respond to last autumn's mass protests of human rights defenders. The 88 Generation leaders, including Min Ko Naing, Ko Ko Gyi, women activists like Su Su Nwey, and others bravely expressed their grievances time and again in letters, statements and public demonstrations prior to the Saffron Revolution. Their courageous calls fell on deaf ears; they now remain imprisoned.

It is time to strongly condemn the exclusion of a considerable number of people from voting and to insist on the release of Burma's political prisoners. The United Nations and the European Union should be ready to reject conclusively the result of the referendum and strengthen sanctions against the regime. Burma's neighbors in Asia should step looking the other way as Burma's rulers trample on Burma's citizens.

The UN Security Council should consider instituting a universal arms embargo, and the European Union should adopt banking sanctions that target the regime and its cronies. Moreover, the UN should not only condemn, but without further delay put action to today's genuine assistance to the regime's obstruction of foreign assistance in victims of the cyclone. Their deaths are the sole responsibility of the military junta which, deliberately and with knowledge of the likely consequences, partially denied the host to humanitarian aid and workers from all over the world. Their actions represent an appalling crime against humanity.

The military-run referendum will not bring democracy to Burma, nor will it help the Burmese people, who now are suffering not only from the authoritarian regime and poverty, but also from a grave natural disaster and its totally inept handling by the cynical generals. Burma's rulers have shown the world their true face.

Vaclav Havel is a former president of the Czech Republic. Desmond Tutu is a winner of the United Nations Peace Prize. Richard von Weizsäcker is a former president of Germany. Karel Schwarzenberg is foreign minister of the Czech Republic. Andre Glucksmann is a French philosopher. Frederik Willem de Klerk is a former president of South Africa. Wilko Mbeki is the former director of the World Trade Organization. Grigory Yavlinsky is leader of the Yabloko party in Russia.

THEY SAID

Out-of-bounds

"There's what happens if a ranking civilian authority would openly endorse threat to kill politicos. These lawenforcement agencies should be the epitome of security."

—Commission on Human Rights chair Leila de Lima, blasting Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's remarks for the alleged release of three men in Batangas in relation to the Hello Garci scandal in August 2005

Unlike lawmakers

"Thank you very much that during the time when my father was a lawmaker, you allowed him to show a way of life that is contrary to the ways of many among you, and thank you very much for recognizing that a lawmaker can be his constituency's father and he empowered still."

—The late lawmaker's daughter Crispin Beltran's daughter Tess in their reply to Rep. Rodolfo Antonino's decision of her father as the House of Representatives

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TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to [illegible]

Editor Joaco V. Sarmiento Jr.

WHAT DOCTORS DON'T SAY ABOUT CANCER

Since 1995, cancer has been the third leading cause of death among Filipinos, after heart disease and stroke. It climbed to No. 3 from No. 5 in just a decade, according to the Department of Health (DOH).

DOH data from 1978 to the present also show a continuous drop in the cases of communicable diseases and a steady rise in the incidence of lifestyle illnesses such as heart disease and cancer.

While research has produced new vaccines and drugs in recent years for pneumonia (top killer in 1985) and tuberculosis (third then), it has not made much progress in finding the cure for cancer. Decades of breakthroughs have raised hopes but have failed to live up to expectations.

$14.8 billion
The annual US budget for cancer research, an amount that is roughly a number of
4.7 months
the budget of Iraq's defense ministry

An eminent researcher for the US National Cancer Institute has told his colleagues not to look at cancer as a state of being—when a malignant cell invades another part of the body—but as a process called carcinogenesis in which "we can intervene earlier in the process" before it becomes irreversible.

Pharmacology and medicine Professor Michael Sporn suggests that if we are to win the war on cancer, we have to change our outlook on the dreaded disease. He says we don't have to wait until bright red flames are coming out of the roof to know that our house is on fire. Cancer begins much earlier than that. We have to douse those embers smoldering in us for years—before they become a blaze.

Ignatz A. Villarba

Doctors get sick, too

By Cesar C. Villalba Jr., MSSW

The chief oncologist of a cancer institute is a major medical center look almost seven months from diagnosis before succumbing to colon cancer.

A past president of the Philippine College of Physicians, the umbrella organization of practitioners of internal medicine, spent about a year battling the same disease unsuccessfully.

Over the past decade, eight medical directors of hospitals in Metro Manila have been among members of the medical profession stricken with cancer.

If these elite treat cancer ineffectively or the very disease they have been trained to save people from, where can patients turn to?

"Despite advances in early detection and treatment, overall death rates from cancer have remained largely unchanged since the early 1970s, suggesting that the strategic research focused on prevention," past president Gloria Cristel-Luna, MD, said at the Philippine Society of Medical Oncologists Convention in 2003.

Multidimensional approach

"Even as more than 20 year integrative medicine practice, Omar Araiza, MD, echoes a parallel supposition. Instead of seeking the magic bullet, doctors—in partnership with patients, the medical-industrial complex and complementary health care providers—should work for a comprehensive, multidimensional approach not only in treatment but more so in prevention.

"Based on clinical experience here and abroad, many with terminal cancer live quality of life and survival rates are usually greater with an integrative approach," says Araiza.

The Asian Clinical Oncology Society has adopted a similar theme, "Multidisciplinary Approach to Cancer Care." For its 6th international conference in Manila, Asian Surgical Oncology and their American counterparts will tackle Integrative Oncology as an emerging model in cancer care, incorporating the contributions of "the Sciences of Mind, Body and Spirit."

Environment: more than genes

In their analysis of statistics in 2006, the Philippine Society of Oncologists Inc. had "Cancer and the Environment" for its theme. Advances in genetic research have somehow overshadowed the direct relationship of toxic chemicals to cancer.

The Philippine Handbook of Clinical Oncology quoted John Bunker of the Harvard Environmental Research Center in the United States as stating, "It is now apparent that although genetic predisposition exists, the key factors determining whether or not people develop cancer are environmental."

A 1981 epidemiological study reported in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute of no individual diet factor underscored environmental influences over the diet determinants of the world's varying cancer rates, and not genetic factors. In the course of three generations, Japanese migrants to the United States contracted colon cancer at the same rate as the general American population. In contrast, the colon cancer rate in Japan remained about one-fourth the American incidence.

Each year, people are exposed to thousands of toxic chemicals and pollutants in the food's atmosphere, water, farmland soil. These pollutants manifest themselves in a variety of symptoms, including decreased immune function, neurotoxicity, hormonal disturbances, psychological disturbances—and cancer.

Behavioral changes

Research has shown that smoking and diet contributed to one-third of annual cancer deaths. Simple behavioral changes such as quitting smoking have helped lower the murder rate of lung cancer. Studies estimated that diet modifications could prevent approximately 20 percent to 30 percent of all cases of cancer.

As citizens of an environmentally challenged world threatened by the lack of control over diseases and ecological disasters, we have to overcome fear by learning the best things we have at hand out—our knowledge and thinking. The night is a new wellness paradigm emerging to identify its basic tenets (more natural, organic and phytonutrients based).

On a personal level, those of us living in the city are at risk and can control much depend on making comprehensive lifestyle changes.

On a collective level, governments, health institutions and the private sector should adopt more innovative preventive approaches to cancer prevention.

What makes us sick?

Autointoxication

Toxins have accumulated in the human body faster than they can be eliminated. Private cells carry within their bodies a number-day chemical cocktail derived from industrial chemicals, pesticides, food additives, heavy metals and residues of pharmaceutical drugs, legal drugs (alcohol, tobacco and caffeine) and illegal drugs (heroin, cocaine and marijuana).

Bioaccumulation happens when waste materials stay in the body long enough to allow toxins to be reabsorbed in the blood and accumulated in the body

Environmental hazards: We are exposed to chemicals in far greater concentrations than the previous generations were. We live in areas that exceed toxic standards. Many of the water systems are polluted and unfit to drink or even to

Air pollution: When inhaled, carbon monoxide and other products of incomplete are not only toxic to the body but also create serious environmental vulnerability; positive ions in which disease-causing agents, microbes and cancer factors thrive and multiply.

Modern-day diet: The convenience-oriented diet of excess animal proteins, fats, caffeine, alcohol, food additives and preservatives inhibit the optimum function of our cells and tissues, organs and bodily systems.

Douse those embers smoldering in us for years before they become a blaze

The figures from Americans for Safe Food, a consumerism research organization, depict the toxic levels of typical urban areas in the world today.

700
chemicals found in water, including excessive levels of lead, chlorine, fluoride, mercury

2,000
active ingredients in animal drugs' antibiotics for mixed, veterinary medicines

3,000
food additives used in the food supply: colorings, waxes, emulsifiers, flavor enhancers, thickening agents and preservatives in food processing and storage, which can remain in the body for years

10,000
toxic chemicals in the form of resins, cements, food packaging, rubber bands, in everyday products such as gasoline, paint, household cleansers, pesticides, fumigants and dry-cleaning fluid

What can restore our health?

Detoxification

Natural healing says our bodies are designed to repair themselves and combat any potentially harmful substance we encounter. If healing does not occur, it is because these processes are blocked by toxic overload, malnutrition, psychological barriers, stress, etc. Removing these barriers and toxins will restore

Detoxification is the body's natural process of eliminating or neutralizing toxins via the liver (fatty cholesterol), kidneys (urine), colon (feces), lungs (exhalation), skin (perspiration) and lymphatic system.

Therapy: When the cause is remembered, integrative and naturopathic physicians employ a customized detoxification program to accelerate the body's own natural cleansing processes. The program usually includes dietary changes based on spiritual prayer or meditation) and needs (support of family caregivers), development and may combine physical cleansing, juice and water fasting, cleansing diets, chelation and nutritional, herbal, homeopathic and other biological methods.

Plant-based natural nutrition tells us that we should get our food of course as nature planned and not like consumers, taste of fat today the grains that feed the animals that are processed to feed man.

Ecological imbalance causes environmental problems in [illegible] species and makes [illegible] deadly.

Enzymes are needed to each [illegible] foods and fats consume cells. Because processed foods requires extra digestive enzymes to break it down, our enzyme bank is soon depleted. If the body remains in the cells, the cancer cells attack and convert them into cancerous tissues. Pulverized fats and enzyme solidify over a period of time which [illegible] and the loss of energy in the body.

Hydration: Mineral water and fruit and vegetable juices create an alkaline and oxygenated ocean in the body [illegible] for healing. It also promotes rapid transit time along the digestive tract, preventing autointoxication.

Proper supplementation minimizes conditions for microbial transmissions and generates negative ions healthy for the mind and emotions. Lack of oxygen forces cancer cell formation. Work and easy breathing cleans down the metabolism. Exercise stimulates blood and lymph circulation. Urban cities have bad air while the beach and the mountains have high negative ions ideal for healing.

Food chain: What's coming to dinner?

Infographic design by Ignatz A. Villalba

Close to 100, this Pinoy is still working

By Inquirer staff

But now he works only two days a week. So, it's not his age. It's a result of a cut in the IBN budget and downsizing.

Go-to guy

"Ever was furious with me for weeks when I told him that I had to cut his hours," says Barcelli's boss, Dioen Sima, who runs IBN's Science Information and Analysis Branch.

Barcelli is in charge of all IBN information related to pesticides. He also maintains the library. He's the go-to guy for scientific information who need the latest pesticide research.

"We're a data-driven agency, so there's work to important to cut, "Sima says.

Sima has been with the IBN since 1986, but Barcelli has seniority over the boss.

He started out as a statistical assistant in 1980. The National Older Workers Career Center, a Virginia-based nonprofit organization that helps 55 citizens over the age of 55 find work, studied him the job. He was then 50.

"The fact that we keep assessing his contract every October means we value his contributions to our agency," says Sima. "He's strict here and that is a good employee."

It's unusual, Sima acknowledges. "In our culture, the ability of older workers is not highly valued."

Why work?

So why does the man still work? To parse himself?

Barcelli just slit five of his children through college. He is a published author of textbooks. And he's been committed to the same woman for 39 years.

Is there that he's tough?

Barcelli survived a Japanese prisoner camp in World War II. He dodged death threats after exposing corruption by his coworkers. He weathered the transition when he migrated to the United States from the Philippines. And he overcame grief over the death of two of his children.

To rest money?

Barcelli doesn't need the $113.37 he salary per hour at the IBN. He and his wife both receive supplemental security income, enough for food and amenities like cable TV and high-speed Internet. He owns his own bedroom apartment.

Sima believes it is Barcelli's "life ethic" that keeps him at work. She recalls how he responded when she broke the news that his hours were being cut back.

"He told me he is the breadwinner of the family," Sima says. "His family is pretty well-off. But he feels that as head of the family, it is still his responsibility to provide."

Barcelli says working reinforces age-shredded ethic use to stop working. "Retirement means to relax, or just sit on a rocker, and get loads to work with that aren't fun," he says.

Flag magnets, potted plant

"Welcome to my office," Barcelli says in a soft, husky voice as he settles on his workstation. "Have a seat. Make yourself comfortable."

In his 64-square-foot cubicle are steel filing cabinets adorned by magnets of American flags and miniature covers of Time magazine. A potted philodendron, its leaves green and shiny, sits atop a cabinet.

There are also some Bible passages: "I can do things through Christ who strengthens me—Philippians 4:13."

Like any other student today, Barcelli's work involves around his computer, where he writes quarterly reports and checks e-mails.

On a table are pictures of his and his wife, and more than three dozen members of his family.

Looking at the framed photographs, Barcelli muses: "I want to be able to remember their names. This is why I am still working... In my mind man's gotta."

Shortly before 5 p.m., Barcelli heads to the library to look up for the day.

He walks slowly but with a straight back, thanks in his training as a soldier during the war. His biceps he while hair is now gray. He wears eyeglasses with a brown tint to protect his allowed chapped eyes from the glare of the computer screen.)

In the hallway, no one passes without a greeting.

"Hi, Bert."

"You're looking great, Bert."

"Have a nice day, Bert."

"Bert is simply an icon," Sima says. "People here have known him. Anybody who wants to cause him discomfort will not be popular for a long time."

Daughter-driver

Returning to his office, Barcelli phones his youngest daughter, Milagros, whose job for the last nine years has been to drive him to work in the morning and take him home at night.

Milagros admits being worried about her father still working. "But it's Papa's decision to continue working and we just have to respect that. He's old and his health will determine if he stops," she says.

Thus, Barcelli's family works around his schedule. Milagros arranged that her days off from work would be Mondays and Tuesdays, when Barcelli has to report to the IBN.

"I don't mind driving for Papa," Milagros says. She doesn't seem to worry about her father not getting to work safely.

So Barcelli just keeps on working.

In an essay titled "The Journey of Life with Hearing," which he wrote to mark his 60th wedding anniversary, he said: "It has become a habit for me to think of at look for something to do."

Early worker

Barcelli's journey began in the province of Isabela on Jan. 24, 1923. His father died of pneumonia just a few weeks after his birth, so he learned to work even before starting school.

He made character from the wood of grass roots. His customers were local laundry women who braved their irons with his long-lasting charcoal.

In 1940, Barcelli enrolled as a first-grader at the Baguio Central School. "I was so stunned in growth that I was almost rejected," he says.

The teacher accepted him after he showed that he could reach his left ear with his right arm fully stretched over his head.

BACK@Work Barcelli at home after another day's work.

Going to school meant walking barefoot. "Shoes and slippers were not common among most school children during my primary years," he recalls.

In school, he learned nursing and reading Filipino and English, arithmetic, Philippine geography and history, music and drawing.

He was also drilled in good manners and right conduct, and given practical skills like gardening and sewing.

On weekends, Barcelli and his sister made lemonade (lemonade) and gulutan (a drink made of gelatin, water, sugar and vanilla) to cater in the cockfighting aficionados gathering next door in the family home.

He used the earnings to buy school supplies.

He completed grade school in March 1938 with a rating of "excellent."

Love of his life

But while he did well in grade school, Barcelli almost couldn't go to high school. Money was tight.

His mother had remarried and had eight more children, and she and her husband could not afford to pay for Barcelli's high school tuition and books.

So Barcelli sought the help of his wealthy maternal grandfather, Don Vicente Cayabo, who agreed to shoulder his school expenses. In June 1935, Barcelli enrolled at Isabela High School, a place that would make an important difference in his life.

Unbeknown to him, the girl who was to become his wife—Generosa Santiago—was going to the same high school.

"Nina and I never knew each other. We never just two individuals, part of the big crowds," Barcelli says.

He did not meet "the love of my life" until 1938, during a stage production of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." He played one of the dwarfs, and she, one of the fairies.

It took Barcelli eight years to summon the gumption to confess his feelings to Generosa.

With Dumas' help

On Valentine's Day in 1946, he sent her a card. A month later, he made "a formal declaration of my admiration and love."

But Generosa was elusive. She went on to be a nurse and did not write back.

Barcelli worked harder to win her over. His large writing, sometimes three letters a day, but still no luck.

Desperate to get a response, he "borrowed" a few lines from Alexandre Dumas' "The Three Musketeers."

"If your love and happiness could only be purchased with the last drop of my blood, I would shed that drop..."

Bonus: did the trick. Barcelli and Generosity were married on May 26, 1957.

Barcelli describes the wedding as "simple yet with significant, (temperature but well attended)."

He adds: "God was there to join two young hearts together with solemn vows in strong and to record that only death can part us."

Wartime

Life was wonderful until December 1941 when the Japanese invaded the Philippines, then a US commonwealth.

President Franklin Roosevelt dispatched all military units. Men of age, including Barcelli, were drafted in the Philippine Commonwealth Army.

His wife was then pregnant with their eldest child. He had to leave her along with their son and daughter.

During one encounter with Japanese soldiers, Barcelli's regiment ran out of ammunition. They were also outnumbered. "We had to surrender, and became prisoners of war," he says.

Barcelli and several other Filipino POWs were taken to a Japanese garrison in Pampanga.

As a result of his interrogation, when the Japanese learned that he was not actually a soldier and was just forced to enlist following the orders of the US president, Barcelli was released in March 1942.

The war continued. Japanese air raids became more frequent. From Manila, Barcelli's wife and two children had to flee to Isabela.

Meanwhile, Barcelli had been walking seven days and was exhausted.

By the time he reached a hut in where a family offered to take him in, he was already ill and fighting for his life.

"I was not my sickbed for three-and-a-half months. I was practically reduced to bones," he says. "I became strong because of God."

Reunion

When he became well enough to walk, Barcelli began his journey back to Isabela, where his wife was anxiously waiting.

They were reunited on June 10, 1942.

After the war, Barcelli moved his family back to Manila where he worked as a teacher and built a four-bedroom house for his family.

Between teaching hours plus, he wrote textbooks. He used the book sales to pay for his children's college tuition.

In 1949, Barcelli resigned as a teacher and worked as an assistant registrar in the University of the East (UE) in Manila. In 1965, he was promoted in the post of college registrar.

It was during his stint as registrar that he found 12 employees altering the grades of students for a fee. All 12 employees were eventually dismissed.

Barcelli supported this to be the cause of threatening messages to his children from anonymous callers: "Tell your Tatay his days are numbered."

He had to carry a .38 cal. revolver, "fully loaded, unlocked, ready to shoot."

Immigration

In February 1975, Barcelli, then 60, retired from UE.

He and his wife moved to the United States after six months, their son Robert, a doctor in California, having filed a petition for them to become US permanent residents.

The couple decided to settle in Virginia because, Barcelli says, "this is the state he knows."

Life was pleasant for the Barcelli until October 1986, when their fourth child, Julio, suffered a cerebral stroke. Julio lived but practically became a vegetable.

In January 2003, Barcelli experienced what he calls the greatest shock of his life: when his middle child Vina died of cancer.

As if her death were not devastating enough, Julio succumbed to stroke around four months later.

"I was totally upset," Barcelli says.

But he moved on. "I still have my wife," he says.

They celebrated their 71st wedding anniversary last month.

Dinner

Nina Barcelli, now 93, is on the phone when her husband arrives home from work at 5:30 p.m.

She quickly says goodbye and runs across him to the dining table laden with his favorites—baked chicken pasta, spring rolls and pudding, which she spent the whole afternoon cooking.

There are desserts on the table, but Nina is careful to keep them for later because "it's bad for your health," she says.

"But I can eat anything," argues Barcelli, who was hospitalized for two weeks last year with a blood clot in his left arm.

"So, you should try this," Nina tells him, spooning pasta on his plate.

At they eat, they take turns at giving a rundown of their day's activities. He narrates his encounter with Dioen Sima, and she recalls the phone conversations she had with relatives and friends.

For the Barcelli, "friends" are mostly people they met in church. Most, if not all, of their contemporaries in the Philippines and in the United States are dead.

It's sad, of course, but in a way it has given Barcelli one more job to do. He has a collection of the eulogies he delivered at all the funerals, and he wants to get it published.

"This is the job that I think God ordained for me," Barcelli says. "After this, I'm ready."

(The author is completing a master's degree in journalism at Harvard University on a Nieman Fellowship. She wrote this piece for her profile-writing class at Harvard.)

₱2-B subsidy for power

By Inquirer staff

Regions, Region 3 and Region 4A).

She said she also had yet to decide on the mode of the cash transfer—"whether this would be in our household, in our group or in every community."

She added that she was likewise still studying the requirements to be imposed on the beneficiaries of the cash transfers. One option is for small electricity users to present their last monthly bill to authorities she said.

Unlike the other cash transfer programs of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, this one cannot be a conditional one because of, among others things, the small amount involved, Cabral said.

"It's really just a subsidy to help them get by," she said.

VAT on oil

Malacañang had earlier announced a government plan to cut on oil for the people's benefit.

Lawmakers are seeking the scrapping of the VAT on oil. But Palace officials have opposed this, saying at one point that it would be "a non-serious thing to the finisa."

After last week's Cabinet meeting in La Union, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Malacañang's plan was "to give back to the people the proceeds of the VAT on oil."

Bunye said that the Palace had earmarked ₱6 billion for the people—₱2 billion to go to the conditional cash transfer program of the DSWD, ₱1 billion in assistance to the transport sector (particularly for the conversion of vehicles to gas fueled vehicles), and another ₱3 billion for loans and assistance to schools.

During the meeting, Ms Arroyo ordered the reactivation of the Presidential Task Force on Energy and gave it two weeks to come up with a contingency plan on how the country could cope with the rising cost of power and oil.

Cabinet's report will apparently be part of the task force's contingency plans.

After 359 years, local hero gets his due

By Inquirer staff

On June 1, 1649, Sanciens plunged a spear into Fr. Miguel Ponce Barbosa, the senior of Bulapag, killing him and signaling the start of the rebellion in the town.

Historians say the forced drafting of men for labor in the shipyards in Cavite was the main cause of the uprising.

The rebellion in Bulapag immediately caught fire in other towns of Batangas, the southern towns of the northern and southern parts of Batangas, the country's third largest island.

Historians say the rebellion gained momentum and quickly spread to other places such as Lemery, Taal, Balayan and Calatagan towns in Northern Batangas, then to the towns of Taal, Balayan and Calatagan towns in Northern Batangas, then to the towns of Taal, Balayan and Calatagan towns in Southern Batangas, and Pagsanjan and other towns in the west coast of Samar.

A revolt subsequently broke out in Leyte, followed by insurrections in Sorsogon, Albay and Camarines Sur (Bicol), in Cebu province (in the Visayas), and then to Cavite, Ilocos, Cagayan, Zambonga and some parts of Bicolano, Bataan and Davao (all in Mindanao).

Spanish officers, supported with hundreds of men from Zambonga and Pampanga, moved to quell the rebellion in April 1650. But it took several months before they finally defeated Sanciens and his troops, who had taken refuge in a fortified place called "Meza de Pulagong."

The rebellion lasted for a year and three months. It ended tragically when one of Sanciens's men, who sided with the enemy, killed and beheaded him in August 1650.

18-foot pedestal

It was the national government that recognized Sanciens, and the local government coordinated with the NHCP only when it conducted studies on the hero, Mayor Dan told Inquirer Batangas by phone on Friday.

He said the statue of Sanciens—which stands on a 10-foot pedestal and depicts the hero with a spear in the right hand and a sandog (a long blanket wrapped around in the waistband)—was put up in the town plaza years ago.

"I just had the statue painted," he said.

According to Dan, a similar statue of the hero stands in the capital town of Carmona, about 60 kilometers from Bulapag, and the main campus of the army in the province, also located in Carmona, is named after Sanciens.

The ruins of the ancient church of Bulapag, where the Sanciens rebellion began, can still be seen in the coastal town.

Batangas Lieutenant Gov. Raul Enriquez and the NHCP's Quiapo are to lead today's unveiling ceremony that will be witnessed by Bulapag officials and residents.

"We have been preparing for this big event, and the guests have already confirmed their attendance," Dan said.

He said barangay officials, public school teachers, war veterans and soldiers-engineers based in Bulapag had been invited to the rites.

"We expect a crowd of 500 people," he said.

2nd in the province

The Sanciens statue is the second to Batangan heroes to be recognized by the NHA, Dan said.

The first is in Calatagan town, where the NHA earlier installed a historical marker in recognition of local guerrillas who valiantly fought American troops on April 15, 1900.

The US War Department described the Calatagan battle as the "heaviest bloody encounter yet for American troops" in the Philippine-American War.

Some 26 American soldiers died in that battle than lasted for four days.

PULAPAG Mayor Ricardo Dela stands in front of the statue of his hero Agustin Sanciens whose historical marker is set to be unveiled today.

338th FOUNDATION DAY
SPECIAL REPORT

Makati - Where there's always something to smile about

PEOPLE FIRST

In Makati, economic growth translates to more services

In the city of Makati, more students are staying in school and fewer residents worry about getting sick.

Every school year, the city's public school students receive school bags, school supplies, school uniforms, textbooks and work books from the city government. They have access to computers – with a ratio of one student per computer – and the latest laboratory facilities.

Residents can depend on a public health care system that provides free medical assistance and health services, and the elderly receive free cakes on their birthday, and watch movies for free in any of the city's upscale cinemas. Twice a year, Makati's senior citizens receive a P1000 allowance from the city government.

> The Makati experience shows that if the government earns the trust of the stakeholders, if we put our minds together, and show a willingness to make painful but necessary decisions, we can overcome any challenge.

And with a city-sponsored skills training program, an increasing number are now finding it easier to land jobs in the thousands of companies and business establishments in the city.

Makati has gone a long way since its founding 338 years ago, and 22 years since the February 1986 EDSA Revolution. It is hard to imagine Makati as being anything but dynamic, but that was not the case 22 years ago.

While Makati was already the financial center in 1986, its public facilities and services could be likened to those of a third-class municipality, and not of the premier municipality. It was also on the verge of fiscal collapse.

Makati Mayor Jejomar C. Binay never fails to drive home the point that Makati has not always been blessed with good revenues.

"Our first few years were challenging times, but we were able to overcome these challenges with the cooperation of the residents and the private sector," Binay said. "The Makati experience shows that if the government earns the trust of the stakeholders, if we put our minds together, and show a willingness to make painful but necessary decisions, we can overcome any challenge."

A human rights lawyer during the martial law years, Binay was appointed by former President Corazon Aquino as municipal officer-in-charge immediately after the February 1986 Revolution.

Binay recalls that the municipal government at that time had total debts and obligations of P200 million, as against an income of P100 million.

The Binay administration took drastic but sensible measures to address the issue: it enforced fiscal discipline, streamlined revenue collection, purged the payroll, and cancelled many contracts that were clearly disadvantageous to the local government.

After just one year, the local government already had a surplus. Binay then proceeded to use the revenues to provide better services for Makati's residents, services that are consistent with Makati's status as the country's financial capital.

After 22 years, Binay says these programs have had an impact on the standard of living of Makati families. "If you are, for example, a minimum wage earner but you have the Yellow Card that takes care of your medical bills and you don't have to worry about tuition fees, school supplies and uniforms during school openings, it translates into savings for the family."

> Binay has succeeded in setting the city's financial house in order, paving the way for the city's fiscal turnaround – from a bankrupt municipality to one of the richest local government units in the country today.

Makati has a land area of 27.36 sq.km., which is only 4.3 percent of the total land area of the National Capital Region.

With a resident population of some 600,000, the city swells to an estimated 3.7 million every day as people from other parts of Metro Manila and nearby provinces make their way to Makati to work or to shop.

Makati today is host to the head offices of 40 per cent of the country's top 1,000 corporations. In 2007, Makati recorded over 55,000 business establishments, 453 banks, six five star hotels, more than 5,000 restaurants, 34 embassies and 34 consulates. It also has the largest number of companies engaged in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), Information Technology Outsourcing (ITO) and Engineering Services Outsourcing (ESO). According to the Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP), Makati is host to 146 of the 200 BPO firms, 16 of 33 ITO firms, and 57 of 121 ESO companies. Taken together, Makati is the homebase for 219 of the 554 BPO, ITO and ESO companies in Metro Manila.

Since 1987, a year after Binay's appointment as officer-in-charge of Makati, the city's annual revenue has remained on an upward trend, and the city has never incurred a budget deficit.

In 2007, the city collected a total of P8,034,783,706.47, surpassing its collection of P8.416 billion in 2006. This year, the city government collected P4.171 billion in taxes from January of March this year, topping by about five percent last year's collection of P3.958 billion during the same period.

Binay says that the city's financial stability has enabled the city government to increase its budget appropriation this year for its various programs and services.

Since his appointment as officer-in-charge of Makati in 1986, Binay has succeeded in setting the city's financial house in order, paving the way for the city's fiscal turnaround – from a bankrupt municipality to one of the richest local government units in the country today. Over the past two decades, Makati's annual collection has grown at an average growth rate of 18.2 per cent, and the city has consistently posted a budget surplus each year.

Binay adds: "We need to maintain Makati's competitive advantage, and always be alert to other opportunities for growth. We also need to ensure that the benefits of growth extend to residents in terms of employment, economic opportunities, and quality public services in health and education. Governments are not here to make a profit, or to leave their money idle. We are here to provide services, and to make sure that the taxes are used to provide much needed services to those who really need it." ■

Across the NATION

136 firms penalized for wage violation

By Rommel Rapallcan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—OVER A HUNDRED COMPANIES IN CENTRAL Visayas have been penalized for failing to implement the wage order issued late last year.

Department of Labor and Employment 7 regional director Elmi Caymoring revealed this as he assured companies to comply with the new Wage Order No. 16, that raised the minimum daily wage by P17, supposed to take effect in mid-June.

Caymoring said 136 companies, representing 12 percent of the total number of companies in the region, failed to implement Wage Order No. 15, which pegged the minimum wage to Metro Cebu at P310, and have been slapped with corresponding penalties.

Caymoring said the erring companies, most of which are located in Metro Cebu, were directed to double individually their workers as a form of penalty.

Double indemnity means that the total amount of underpayment to the workers must be doubled, Caymoring said.

"We cannot slow down them down because we do not want to promote unemployment," Caymoring said.

Caymoring said the figure was smaller than the 20 percent non-compliance level in previous wage orders but the number of businesses that did not implement Wage Order No. 15 could also be higher since DOLE 7 has not supervised all the companies in the region.

Caymoring said most of the violating companies claimed they had no intention to defy the wage order but they just did not know the technical descriptions of their workers, and have an idea if they were covered by the wage order.

The P17 daily wage hike mandated under Wage Order No. 16 that the Central Visayas Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board issued last week still has to be approved by the Regional Wages and Productivity Commission but it is expected to take effect by the middle of this month, Caymoring said.

DOLE 7 would start checking on the companies' compliance to the new wage order on the third month after the wage increase is implemented, he said.

Caymoring urged workers to report to his office those employers who do not implement the increase.

Caymoring said some workers are willing victims of their abusers by agreeing to sign a blank payroll, the reason DOLE could not convict erring employers.

House probes Aussie mining firm's 'abuses'

SOLANO, NUEVA VIZCAYA—THE HOUSE committee on cultural communities has launched an investigation into the alleged abuses committed by an Australian mining firm against indigenous peoples in an upland village in Kasibu town.

House Resolution No. 594, filed by Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño, seeks to look into cases of illegal demolition of houses and ejection of Ikalahan and Pinglabokod residents in Didipio village in Oceanagold Philippines Inc. clears the land for its planned $117-million gold-copper project.

"Tribal residents have expressed disgust over the rapid loss of their rice lands amid the clearing operations by Oceanagold. Village officials have also denounced the alleged haphazard destruction of their watersources," the resolution said.

The probe of OceanaGold is the second to be conducted by the House committee investigating foreign-owned mining projects in Nueva Vizcaya.

Visit

In September, the panel began an investigation on the operations of Rosario Resources Inc., also an Australian firm, amid allegations of fraud and bribery, and one of several cases against Ibaloi, Ifugao and Kalanguya residents in nearby Ifugao and Kalinga-Apayao.

Nueva Ecija Rep. Carlos Padilla said members of the House panel, chaired by Benguet Rep. Samuel Dangwa, would visit the two mining areas on June 6 and 7 to conduct public hearings on the issues surrounding the mining activities. The hearings have been reset from May 29.

"The results of these investigations will allow us to look at the defects of the 1995 Philippine Mining Act. We can also recommend the filing of charges against these mining companies if they are found to have violated our laws," Padilla said.

Since Tuesday, the Inquirer has been trying to reach for comment Bonnacorso Lopez, Oceanagold vice president for communications and external affairs, but he would not take calls—his mobile phone is responsive to text messages.

But in earlier interviews, Lopez said Oceanagold always welcomed investigations on its activities by government agencies to give the company the opportunity clarify matters.

He said the company's activities are all scrutinized by the financial and technical assistance agreement (FTAA) granted to it by the Philippine government.

Padilla said the House investigation would enable the public to have access to important documents concerning the Didipio project.

"We have initial findings of inconsistent violations on the FTAA granted to Oceanagold. That will be proven once we get hold of these documents," he said.

Cause and doubt

In his resolution, Casiño cited the growing opposition to the company's operations in Didipio, led by Bishop Ramon Villena and the Catholic Church. Didipio and Kasibu leaders, civil society groups and the provincial government.

"Villena, who also chairs the regional development council of Cagayan Valley, has opposed the Didipio project, saying it does not follow the Arroyo administration's goal of developing Northern Luzon as an agribusiness hub," Casiño said.

Since last month, the provincial government and Oceanagold have been embroiled in a dispute over the latter's refusal to pay around P20 million in unrealized payroll taxes.

The company has stood firm not to comply with the April 9 order and desist order issued by Gov. Luisa Cascolan, citing a directive from Environment Secretary Lito Atienza to evaluate operations.

In May 14 letter to Patrick Godfrey Ion, OceanaGold country president, Atienza asked the firm to resume its operations, including its earth-moving activities. Aleksey Gimeno, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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Mayor asks DepEd to move class opening

LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN—Mayor Eugenio Martinez of Infanta town has asked the Department of Education to postpone the opening of classes in his town for at least a month to give time for the repair of classrooms damaged by tropical storm "Cosme" on May 17.

Martinez said 95 classrooms in 13 villages in Infanta were destroyed by the typhoon and many school buildings did not have roofs.

"Please pity the children, especially now that the rainy season is here," he said.

Dr. Elena Baloy Toto, Pangasinan 1 schools division superintendent, earlier told the governor that classes will only be postponed in schools whose roofs were no remaining classrooms that could be used by students.

"Initially, there are five schools in my division, which may not be ready by June 10. There are three in Infanta and one each in San Nicholas and Burgos [town]," Toto said.

"Maybe, a delay of one month. But we are trying to fast track the rehabilitation that's why our engineers are here," she said.

Toto also said DepEd has released P30 million in assistance to schools damaged by the typhoon has been ongoing in Binmaley 1 General and Binmaley South General elementary schools. Those schools' roofs were blown away by the typhoon.

But Martinez said no repair has started in any of the schools in his town.

He said it was only Gov. Amado Espino Jr. who has given him financial assistance for the repair of the schools.

He said teachers had told him in a meeting that DepEd would provide them tents as makeshift classrooms.

"I don't think it will work. It will not be comfortable for the children," Martinez said.

He said it would have been better if they held classes under the trees. But all the trees in his town were either uprooted or pruned by the typhoon, he said.

Toto said while the extent of damage to schools was massive, there were still classrooms in most schools that could be used.

"So, we can reserve to double sessions or double shifting. There will be morning and afternoon classes," Toto said.

Martinez also appealed to the national government to send relief goods to typhoon victims in his town.

"That's really my problem. Our attention is very difficult," he said.

He said so far, only nongovernment organizations have conducted relief operations in his town. These include the Philippine National Red Cross, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., Philippine Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Office of Senate president Manuel Villar Jr.

The typhoon left four people dead, 35 hurt and thousands of residents homeless in Infanta. Hundreds of families who depended on fishing lost their boats after those were crushed by strong waves from the South China Sea.

"I'm appealing and begging for help from President Macapagal...Always to help us restore classrooms in Infanta so the children would go to school," Martinez said.

He said many residents in his town have no money to rebuild their houses and would appreciate financial assistance so they could buy galvanized iron sheets and other housing materials. *Gabriel Cawilanan, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

TEACHERS of the Mayon Elementary School in Barangay Mayon in Infanta, Pangasinan, dry textbooks drenched by rain accompanying tropical storm "Cosme." Infanta was among the areas hardest hit by Cosme.

Vietnamese poachers caught in Palawan

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Fourteen Vietnamese fishermen were arrested Friday afternoon by members of the city government's environment unit in Barangay Sicsican, about 30 kilometers north of the city.

The fishermen were caught poaching in Honda Bay, a marine sanctuary, while fishing in Philippine coastal waters some 20 kilometers off Puerto Princesa City.

Gil. Roland Recharo, officer in charge of the PNP Maritime Palawan, said the fishermen were on board FB QNG 90868 and were caught with illegal fishing gears.

"We are conducting an inventory of the boat and preparing charges of poaching and illegal entry," Recharo said.

An interpreter for the fishermen said authorities let the fishermen go after they promised to enter Philippine waters.

Initial reports from members of the environment team indicated that the Vietnamese had been arrested the same morning fishing activities when they were reported by local fishermen to authorities.

Recharo said the arrested Vietnamese nationals were brought to this city early morning Friday for inquest.

In the past, Vietnamese and Chinese fishermen were caught poaching in Palawan waters but most of them were usually released with intervention by their own embassies. *Redempto Anda, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Binay, JDV give relief goods to Pangasinenses

MERIDALE, PANGASINAN—Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay surprised Bonganian residents on Friday when he distributed free truckloads of relief goods to people here and in other towns devastated by tropical storm "Cosme."

Binay was met by cheering local government employees, barangay officials and residents when he entered the town hall here on Friday afternoon.

He said Pangasinan is close to his heart, noting that this town's mayor, Kimpoklin Bonavia, and San Fabian Mayor Hospicio Lintuman Jr., are his friends.

Binay said Makati had initially planned to help areas in Pangasinan that forged sister-hood relations with his city.

Makati City has sisterhood relations with this town, San Fabian, Bonuken and Dagupan City.

But Marcos and Lubao (Lilluban) had told him to help them since many people in Pangasinan suffered from the typhoon's effects, Binay said.

On Monday, 19 mayors of typhoon-hit towns wrote Binay to ask for help.

"We did not expect Mayor Binay would act that fast. Now, we have the goods and he delivered them," Bonavia said.

Aside from Bonavia and Lintuman, among the mayors who welcomed Binay were Lingayen Mayor Jose Calimlim, Bugallon Mayor Rodrigo Orduña, Infanta Mayor Eugenio Martinez, Mangaldan Mayor Hermilando Mandanas, Aguilar Mayor Edwardo Evangelista and Labrador Mayor Romulo Asuncion.

Binay distributed relief goods worth P100,000 each to the 16 towns. On his way to Metro Manila, he had three stops in the typhoon-stricken towns of Lingayen, Bugallon and Aguilar.

Asked whether his presence in the province had something to do with his expressed desire to run for president in 2010, Binay said: "Bawal ko kasi ito e, dahil sa among pasaway ang sumulong dahil sa sabi ng mga astrologo, manigas ang puso namin ang mga mga Pangasinan (We are helping Pangasinenses are close to my heart)," he said.

Binay is the president of the United Opposition and had been reported last year to being considered by the coalition as its standard-bearer, with Sen. Jinggoy Estrada as his running mate in 2010.

During his visit to this town in February this year, Binay said that he was interested to run for president.

But he said he would first have to fulfill his promise to serve Makati City where he is on his sixth term as mayor.

On Saturday, two weeks after the typhoon struck, former Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and his wife, Gina, went to Binmaley town to distribute relief goods to typhoon victims.

De Venecia called on Binday, calling to help Pangasinenses, saying it is the responsibility of President Macapagal-Arroyo to rebuild school buildings and houses destroyed by the typhoon here.

The De Venecias on Saturday delivered 750 packs of goods and financial assistance to Binmaley (my home), Urdaneta City, Asingan, Rosales, Villasis, Santa Barbara, Pozorrubio, Sta. Maria, Bautista, Mangatarem, Alcala, Basista, Bolinao, Anda, Agno, Bani, Sual, Labrador, Dagupan City, Lingayen, Mangaldan, Calasiao, Binalonan, Laoac, Urbiztondo, Mapandan, Manaoag, Malasiqui, Asingan, Tayug, Natividad, Sta. Barbara

INQUIRER Mindanao

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Where mind, body and spirit blend

'We envision that the institute becomes a seat of learning for potential healers and healing as well as spiritual souls ready to face the fruitful journey of life'

By Ramon Jorge Sarabosing
Mangagoy, Compostela Valley

THE RIDE TO MARAGUSAN town in Compostela Valley is long and bumpy, but the trip is worth it for people seeking spiritual nourishment and self-healing.

Nestled atop a mountain cliff and tucked away by colonial-white waterfalls and a river make a spectacular sight to the Asherah Spiritual Renewal Center, a monastery-like abode. "There our flesh total serenity and deep connection with God through prayers and meditation. Relax for a way of walking that connects you more deep," says Ir Espe Ocampo, the 71-year-old Advance coordinator.

Officially called the Assumption Missionaries Ashram Institute, it is an interfaith and contemplative ministry of the Missionaries of Assumption dedicated to the promotion of holistic spirituality and relentless healing.

A relatively new spiritual opposite, ashram combines and practices the teachings of Eastern beliefs and philosophy of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. It believes that God is universal and the widest benefits from all its universal spirituality. The mind, body and spirit must blend to a deeper consciousness to attain inherent righteousness and wisdom.

ASHRAM Institute director Sr. Christopher Quinn, a MassCom graduate at Notre Dame of Dadiangas University, teaches the school children to read.

PHOTOS BY RAMON JORGE SARABOSING JR./CORRESPONDENT

Refuge

"It's a sense of refuge," affirms lawyer Grace Ayeng, an Ashram participant.

The main retreat center is in the village of Tacuman in Baguio District in Davao City. It is where workers of peace and tranquility go to seek meditation and prayer sessions. Yoga, reiki, qigong are also conducted along with private emotional prayer and psychic healing sessions.

The objective is to rediscover and create a healthy lifestyle that strengthens one's personal relationship with the supreme nature," says Alberto Cedillo, Ashram brother and center coordinator.

"It's heartwarming to have guests leave spiritually hopeful and emotionally strong, having learned the tools to face life center better," adds Sister Espes, an expert psychic healer and teacher.

Interestingly, even bar restaurants and assisted couples come along with "stipulation" from the religious, academic and professional sectors. "The dialogue of oneself with God or guiding light can be a life-changing experience," Sister Espes said.

Ultimate destination

The Maragusan retreat center, however, is the ultimate destination for those who want to plunge into deep contemplative moments.

"At night, all you hear are the sounds of crickets and the gurgling river below. Their fog envelops it all times," Ashram brother Bobet Bobilles, an agriculturist, said.

The Ashram is a small group of religious and spiritual practitioners who studied in Asia and Europe, enriching their faith even more and promote the idea of the dialogue of peace, within oneself and society.

"We envision that the institute becomes a seat of learning for potential healers and healing as well as spiritual souls ready to face the fruitful journey of life," says Espes.

For the Ashram family and partners, the journey begins now.

Compostela Valley folk shift to corn, other crops

By Francis Lim
Malaybalay, Compostela Valley

FACED WITH INSUFFICIENT rice production and scarce rice supply quotas, Compostela Valley is shifting to corn and indigenous root crops, and is considering hybrid rice seeds to its unsuccessfully discovering rice fields.

"What did exist? Low rice production has been a problem [since] he several decades already," provincial board member Bagobo Antonio said on Tuesday. But, he said, "the public must not worry since we have many alternatives to rice anyway. We've been eating corn, for instance."

Besides, he said, peace guaranteed by the perceived rice shortage would only be exploited by unscrupulous traders, triggering unreasonable prices.

Provincial officials met recently with representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry, National Food Authority, and the 11 municipal agriculture officers to evaluate the current status of the province's rice supply.

Dr. Rebecca Quimba, provincial agriculturist, said the shift from rice to other crops, particularly bananas, in recent years had contributed to the drop in rice production. He cited data from the Bureau of Agriculture Statistics showing that 3,504 hectares of rice lands had been converted to banana plantations since 1999.

Irrigation

"To cover up [for] the loss of production due to land conversion, and for us to reduce cultivation, we need about 3,000 well-irrigated farmlands," Quimba said.

Farmlands said farmers would not be persuaded from converting their rice fields "since it is their right to determine for themselves what type of crops to cultivate for them to earn."

An ideal alternative in the midst of the perceived production shortfall, therefore, would be the cultivation of cashew banana variety and indigenous root crops, like cassava and camote, he said.

"I also encourage the farmers to push and prioritize the cultivation of corn, particularly white corn, in areas deemed as corn producers. They can help the farmers by unloading substantial amounts from their coffers for the seeds," he said.

Antonio is a former mayor of Laak, one of three towns with the smallest areas devoted to rice farming in the province. Of the 11,337 hectares of rice land in Compostela Valley, 9,847 hectares are irrigated, BAS data reveal.

Compostela town has the biggest area devoted to rice with 3,496 hectares. Pantukan town has the smallest with 33 hectares in rice farming, but it has one of the biggest areas of banana plantations.

Quimba said the BAS believes the province was experiencing a rice shortage.

Hybrid rice

Antonio said full food sufficiency would be achieved if hybrid palay seeds were planted in about 7,000 hectares of existing rice lands. He said studies by experts and if farmers used organic fertilizers, he said.

Data from the provincial agriculturist's office show that inbred palay varieties produce an iron ounce four tons per hectare, while hybrid seeds can yield up to six tons.

In Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, Davao del Norte and Davao City, officials in the three provinces and cities officials agreed on the planting of hybrid rice to achieve the goals.

"Hybrid rice kills our farmers in terms of fertilizer cost. It will damage our soil. And hybrid rice is a one-shot deal ... Besides, the cost of each bag of seeds is quite expensive compared to inbred rice seed," said Mayor Mary Ann Lucindo of Baganga, Davao Oriental. She is hoping that the province's entire population of rice farming will be converted to hybrid rice seeds.

Lucindo added: "We need to have more seeds for planting and fertilizers when because hybrid rice need maintenance after the activity of our soil. That means we are stressing the planting and harvesting season calendar," Cordilla said.

Pantukan Mayor Rey Uy in Samar, Davao Oriental, Davao del Norte and Davao City, officials in the three provinces and cities officials agreed on the planting of hybrid rice to achieve the goals.

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"We can [use] the seeds of [about] the [rice] planting season [which] we cannot do with the [hybrid] ... We need to buy new

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THE ARCH of the Centuries on the University of Santo Tomas campus.

THE FACADE of the Far Eastern University which features the Art Deco style.

URBAN RENEWAL

Rediscovering *heritage architecture* in Manila's University Belt

By Tina G. Santos

URBAN PLANNERS, DEVELOPERS and businessmen envision this part of Manila as Metro's answer to the academic boroughs of Paris, Heidelberg and New York.

Sadly, the General University Belt or U-Belt—where some of the country's better known colleges and universities can be found—has deteriorated over the years.

It has, in fact, been described by urban development researchers as "dirty, dangerous and disorganized." They also noted that "narrow and curvilinear streets have been converted into unpleasant traffic in the area is considered among the worst in the National Capital Region. The area has also become notorious for its high crime rate."

The situation prompted various sectors, like the General U-Belt Stakeholders' Group which includes longtime residents and city government officials, to come up with a plan they called "Renewing Heritage in Urban Renewal" that would help resurrect the U-Belt to its former glory.

The urban renewal scheme, drawn up by planners from the University of the East and the Eastern University, started eight years ago, according to Dr. Leonardo Montero of the University of the Philippines School of Urban and Regional Planning (UP-SURP).

Since 2000, a series of research studies have been conducted by community and stakeholder-based groups calling for the revitalization of the area, Montero said, adding that one of their goals is the restoration of the historic Gota de Leche building built in 1917.

"The rationale revived public awareness of the viability of integrating heritage structures with contemporary lifestyles," she explained during a presentation of the concept plan recently.

Some other friends and her students at UP-SURP undertook a study on the development of Gota de Leche as a heritage conservation asset as part of the overall urban renewal plan. They also unveiled an urban design plan that brings together heritage conservation, commercial viability and tourism in the framework for infusing new life and energy into the area.

According to them, the U-Belt is historically significant because it is where pioneers in tertiary education established their institutions of higher learning.

Pride of place

"La Asociación Pro-Gota de Leche de Manila is composed of people in the community. That's why we encourage residents and establishment owners to do their part for this project for this will instill a sense of ownership and pride of place in them," said Atty. Luis Bautista, one of the directors of La Asociación de la Infancia Inc.

La Asociación, which operates Gota de Leche on S.H. Loyola Street (formerly Legarda), is a charitable foundation that campaigns against infant mortality. It also has a feeding program for indigent children.

The urban renewal project involves the creation of a unified area walkway and the improvement of sidewalks and alleys, the development of pedestrian and community parks, and the establishment of a gateway or landmark that would represent all the schools in the area or emphasize the U-Belt's impact on education.

Among the concerns raised by people behind the project were problems concerning traffic, garbage, parking, sidewalk vendors, old dilapidated structures and space and color.

"We were surprised and happy as at the same time because others are invited Mayor Alfredo Lim for the project presentation, he immediately made a commitment to do several things based on the 'doables' recommendations," Bautista said.

"We're hoping that under his administration, we might yet be able to prove that it's possible to preserve heritage sites while making full use of them for educational, commercial or artistic purposes," she added.

Among other things, city and police officials vowed to look into the implementation of a better traffic system, step up police visibility in the vicinity of students and residents and help in the maintenance of old and abandoned structures and property.

On the beautification aspect, Bautista suggested that the city government do something about hanging electrical wires which make the place ugly. She also urged officials to light up the streets around the U-Belt to discourage criminals from mulling around the area.

As part of the makeover, project proponents suggested that the City Council approve an ordinance that would not only regulate the size and placement of billboard advertisements but also ban those depicting sex and violence.

It would also be better if there could be an urban renewal ordinance, one that would declare the General U-Belt area a pilot urban renewal zone, they added.

If their project succeeds, their experience can provide many lessons or inspire similar efforts in other areas, not only in Manila, but in other parts of the country as well, the proponents said.

Eight years ago, the total estimated cost of the project was pegged at around P38 million. "But it may be almost double the cost now," Bautista said. Apart from contributions, funding for the project is expected to come from a possible loan from Asian Development Bank or World Bank.

"There are also potential contributors like the European Union, the Spanish European Agency as well as corporate foundations like Gota de Leche and the Ayala, Lopez and Gokongwei Foundations," she added.

Bautista said they also intend to establish a Heritage Passage-way, preferably in an area between PEU and Gota de Leche, inside Quezon heritage awardees.

"Right now, we're eyeing a vacant lot in the area that will serve as an open air art walk or gallery where students can hold exhibits," she said, adding that city officials have vowed to re-see to it that the passageway is constructed as soon as possible.

Eventually, the stakeholders plan to organize a walking tour to allow locals as well as foreigners the various heritage treasures within the cluster of institutions in the U-Belt.

Unknown to many, the area also boasts structures that stand out because of their architectural character or historical significance.

Urban development researchers have made an inventory of potential stops for a walking tour that could contribute to the commercial revitalization of the place.

They suggested that the tour start at Gota de Leche, a building with an impressive architectural design by pioneering architect Arcadio Arellano. In fact, it received the 2005 Unesco Asia Pacific Heritage Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

Attractions

Tourists can also go on cultural-educational institutions, including the University of Santo Tomas, considered the oldest existing university in Asia, and Far Eastern University-the country's largest Art Deco complex.

Attractions on the UST campus include, among others, the Arch of the Centuries by the entrance which bears the inscription "University in the history of the Filipino people of Philippines."

On the other hand, FEU buildings showcase the Art Deco style of the 1930s that can be seen in the geometric details of the building design and grillwork.

The route can also include passing by the ancestral homes of personalities like former Sen. Pio Rattada Rainer and Jose Maria Tuna, a businessman whose home was open to Philippine revolution figures like Jose Rizal.

At the end of the day the people aspiring to revive U-Belt's splendor of bygone days envision, in the capacity, would not only understand but more importantly, feel proud about the rich cultural background and heritage of the City of Manila.

ONE of the steps in the proposed walking tour of the U-Belt area include the ancestral house of former Sen. Pio Rattada Rainer in Sampaloc.

THE HISTORIC Gota de Leche building was built in 1917.

THE SPRAWLING FEU campus in the Morayta area.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2008

"THE SAD THING is, most OFWs aren't properly oriented for their new roles. Some are clueless as to the weather conditions they're bound to face."
IRMA BOMBERO, (May 2003)

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Gwen Liria

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This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world to ensure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Seafarer savors home after 20 years around the world

Nothing can be as sweet for a Filipino seaman as coming home to his family in a house he built out of the 20 years he spent at sea

By Nini Mamaysayor
and Andrea Echanez
Contributors

FOR FILIPINO SEAfarers, there will never be a shortage of interesting stories about life at sea.

Recently the story of a group of Filipino seafarers who were forced to take their captain hostage while on board a fishing vessel made it to the news. Their gruesome ordeal had all the elements of a tragedy.

But not everything about a seafarer's life ends in tragedy. There are also many stories of joy, fulfillment and hope.

For Carmelito "Lolong" Reyes, a seafarer who rose from the ranks to become an officer in an international cargo ship, his accomplishments were the results of hard work and the right opportunities. Two decades of sailing gave him experiences that were forever etched in his heart and mind.

He remembers going to his four-hour duty every other 12 hours without any day off, working and adjusting with colleagues from various countries, and sailing through rough seas during stormy weather. "Encountering storms at sea is one of the most difficult parts of my job. I could not sleep," Lolong said.

He also recalled how until it was in one endless waves and waves every time their ship traveled straight for more than three weeks.

Fiercest enemy

While homesickness was his fiercest enemy, he also learned patience and courage as thoughts of his family weakened him to do his work. "I was willing to sacrifice and endure difficulties at sea for my family. I am even children and learning that every cent I received at home helped ensure a better future for them was enough incentive for me to work harder," he said.

Lolong's youngest child, Blanca, will finish elementary at the end of this school year.

"I also truly good to know that I am part of the overseas Filipino army which helps keep our economy afloat," he said.

The contributions of remittances sent by Filipino overseas not only to their respective families but to the Philippine economy cannot be overemphasized.

Data show overseas Filipino remittances have contributed 10 percent to the country's Gross National Product.

According to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, remittances entered through formal channels by Filipinos abroad from January to November 2007 amounted to P13 billion, or 14 percent higher compared to the data posted during the same period in 2006. Of this amount, P2 billion came from sea-based workers.

Many Filipinos are enlisted in work aboard international ships not only for the relatively high salaries their shipping companies offer but also because of the opportunity to travel to various places worldwide.

For Lolong, working at sea has always brought him to some of the world's most beautiful places.

"The perks of being a seaman," he said, "includes seeing different countries. They are all nice places although sometimes they all look the same to me. The Philippines is so beautiful and interesting as all of them."

Last year, Lolong's sea adventure came to an end when he retired due to an illness. Fortunately, his employer and insurance firm shouldered his medical expenses, including those for a kidney transplant. His hardship did not go to waste since he came home with his retirement package intact.

With his retirement, Lolong thought of finally presenting his family with the gift of expanded home ownership. He and his wife availed their remaining benefits to aim for their house and searched for an additional property.

Asset managing firm

Upon learning that one of the housing units near his house in Dasmariñas, Cavite was for sale through Balay Financial Services, an asset management and mortgage servicing company, Lolong immediately contacted the Property Operations and Sales Group of BFI. He was pleasantly surprised to learn that their offer was very affordable and responsible. "BFI gave my family a chance to realize our dream of owning a bigger space for our home. This is the fruit of the long and challenging years that I spent at sea."

Formally launched in 2006, BFI offers a complete mortgage servicing platform that combines functional competencies in mortgage finance, loan origination, credit underwriting, loan servicing, default management, property management and secondary market development.

Under BFI's property sales program, pre-owned housing units in attractive locations are offered to homebuyers who either want to convert a house for their families or make real estate investments to garner income.

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Under BFI's property sales program, pre-owned housing units in attractive locations are offered to homebuyers who either want to convert a house for their families or make real estate investments to garner income. A wide range of properties nationwide, particularly in the National Capital Region and the Calabarzon areas, are available with flexible financing for interested buyers.

Lolong is glad that he was able to put his hard-earned money to incredible investments. Aside from investing in real estate, he also learns to learn that would serve as his source of income, especially when he is no longer working at sea. Now that he has retired, he is thankful that his taxi cabs and rental units continuously support the needs of his family.

Real estate growth

He noted that many of his colleagues also have realized the importance of having investments. "A lot of seafarers are interested to purchase houses and lots, especially those who reside in certain provinces and provinces near Metro Manila. Those who are from the provinces usually invest their earnings in rice fields or buy agricultural supplies and equipment. But I heard some of them also buy real estate properties," he said.

Lolong's observation is borne out by statistics. Records from the National Statistical and Coordination Board show the real estate sector grew by 22 percent in 2007.

Analysts aver that the growth in the sector was significantly fueled by increased demands for residential properties from overseas Filipinos and their families. For several property developers and commercial banks, overseas Filipinos accounted for about a third of their housing loan applications in home sales.

Home is where the heart is

The 20 years spent at sea naturally very interesting period for Lolong. He will never run out of stories to share—the storms and other dangers at sea, the long working hours while sailing unceasingly endless oceans, the experiences of disembarking at a port in America, seeing for the first time the romantic parks of Europe, being engulfed by the architectures of the world's grandest cities—the list continues.

Asked which of the countries he'd have to is the best, he replied, "My coolest home is Puerto—our family's low rental—is still the most beautiful place for me." With his current home expansion project to date, Lolong can only say, "there's no place like home."

PROUD HOMEOWNERS Carmelito "Lolong" Reyes, with wife Vilma: "It pays to invest when you're still young. We are now enjoying our retirement."

No veteran left behind in final battle

MARGARITO, A WORLD WAR II veteran, was a member of the recognized guerilla forces fought side by side with the Americans during World War II. He went to the United States in 1995 to apply for his naturalization. His application was denied on the ground that his name was not on the list kept by the Guerilla Affairs Division of the US Army in Missouri.

On appeal, Margarito answered and related all his war efforts and sacrifices, including saving American soldiers to prove that he is a war veteran. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the denial of his naturalization. The Immigration Act permits naturalization only of veterans whose names are found on the SAD list.

Enhancement Act

Margarito reasoned out being able to obtain immigration benefit as a war veteran. Veterans' bills are now pending in the US Congress. Will all Filipino veterans be eligible?

"The US Senate passed the Veterans Benefit Enhancement Act (SB1315) by a vote of 96-1 on April 24. The veterans are waiting for the House of Representatives to pass a House bill similar to SB1315.

SB1315 Enhancement Bill considers provisions relating to an improvement of veterans' benefits, including provisions on insurance, general educational assistance, and housing benefits, among others. These improvements in veteran benefits would be applicable to all veterans and not just Filipino veterans.

Equity Bill much better

Under Section 401, all eligible Filipino veterans who are in the US shall qualify for full VA benefits. Those who are residing in the Philippines shall receive special monthly pension as specified rates due to EDD/transit for single veterans, $351 for married veterans, and $200 for the surviving spouses.

So bill is similar to SB1315 in the House. Only the Equity Bill or HR 760, (The Filipino World War II Equity Act of 2007) is pending in the committee on veterans' affairs.

IMFO
Lourdes Santos Ignacio

In the meantime, intensive lobbying is going on in Capitol Hill for the House of Representatives to support a companion bill to SB1315.

Two views on benefits

If and when a comparable SB1315 is introduced and passed in the House, there could be a problem with two Filipino veterans. The Equity Bill is a much better bill as it provides for full VA benefits to all Filipino veterans, irrespective of residence.

Several veterans' advocates claim that since SB1315 has already passed the Senate, it will be easier for a comparable bill to be also passed in the House of Representatives. Lead legislator, Rep. Bob Filner, is considering a comparable bill in the House as soon as there is enough support.

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The advocates for Equity Bill is a result of the injustice in 1946 when the US Congress deemed Filipino World War II veterans of their US veterans' status and deprived them of US benefits. The only way to restore this historical injustice is for the US Congress to pass another bill that will restore back their status as US veterans and afford the Filipino veterans the same treatment as other veterans who fought under the US flag during World War II. The economic part of the bill should be incidental on the principle behind the full equity.

Diminishing number

During a visit in San Francisco, former president Fidel V. Ramos said that there was no way to resolve the veterans issue unilaterally. There should be a middle ground that must be reached in order what is best for the majority of those who will benefit from the veterans bill. In other words, late senior select is given by US Congress irrespective of the full extent of the equity bill.

Some maintain that the veterans are dying at a faster rate and that this Enhancement Bill should become a law soon so that the beneficiaries would still be alive to enjoy their pension.

Thus, the veterans are diminishing in numbers. But the real issue here is the injustice that was perpetrated in 1946 and which may be corrected only through the passage of an Equity Bill. When the Veterans Benefit Enhancement Act will finally be passed, hopefully all surviving elderly veterans would benefit.

But as required by the amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1990, there is a possibility that not all veterans will be classified as eligible for benefits if their names are not on the SAD list of the US Army.

Those who believe in justice and dignity for all veterans have varying views on the issue. For us who have worked so hard to attain equality for Filipino veterans holding a few positions for equity does not necessarily mean that we are not in favor of veterans' benefits. We only hope for what is best and fair for all those who fought for freedom and democracy. As long as there is a veteran alive, the fight for full equity and recognition focuses.

Comments may be e-mailed at lourdes@inquirer.com.ph or at 521-3007, 521-3175.

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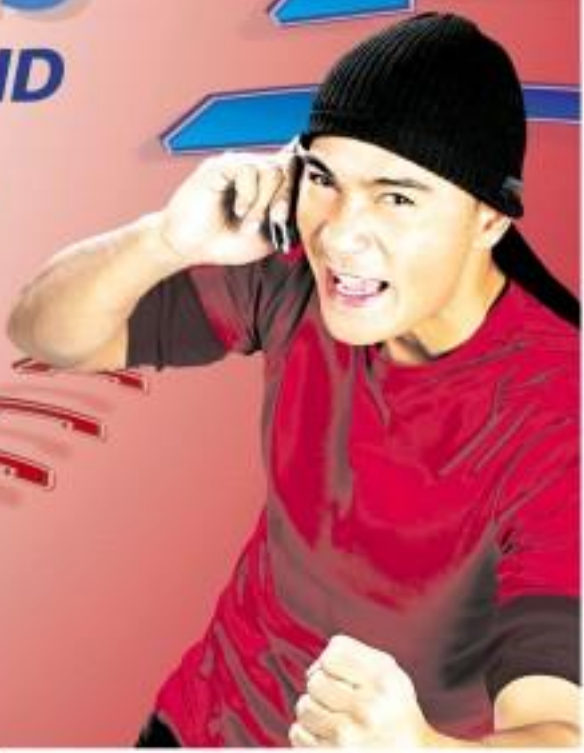

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KUNG ANG INGA BABAENG N TROPOL MAY FAIRY GODMOTHER, ANG INGA LALAKING INEFFICIENT MACHO GODFATHER.
MUKHANG MAY PROBLEMA SIYA!
poof!
poof!
KUNG MAS MALAKI ANG BOSES NG MANUAL KONG E MINETTE, MAYA LANG, DI KO MATAWAGAN PAG TUMAWAG AKO, ANG LAKI KO KALTAS SA LOAD KO.
NAKAKAY KA KUNG SA PER MINUTE CHARGING NA P6.50? TF NO UMAN ALAM NA DI SAKTO SA ISANG MINUTO TAWAG AKO DI BA?
MALIIIIIT, ANG INGA CALLS KO WALA PA SIGURONG ONE MINUTE.
TALAGA? DI KO NAPANSIN YON HA.
BRAIT, PAG UMU I MISS YOU AT I LOVE YOU KO KAY MINETTE, ISANG MINUTO YUN? PERO ANG CHARGE SA YO P6.50 PA RIN!
AY BAKIT MAHABA ANG LOAD MO SA SECONDS NA HINDI MO NAMAN GINAMIT. TAMA BA YUN?!
SOBRA ANG NAGAGASTOS SA 'KIN!!!
KAYA MAS SAKTO CALLS NA NGI 10 CENTAVOS PER SECOND LANG ANG BAWAS SA LOAD MO.
PER SECOND?! OMAYP TOTOO BA YAN?!
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SA SAKTO CALLS, PER SECOND ANG BAWASAN NG LOAD.
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HIGPA-CUTE KA KAY MINETTE. 45 SECONDS NA TAWAG. P120 LANG ANG BAWAS SA LOAD MO. KUMARIN SA P6.50 DATI.
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TOTOO BA YAN?
SAKTO NGA SIL WALANG DAYA YAN!
HALIMBAWA
TUMAWAG KA PERO NAGLARONG KAYO NG GOOD NIGHT BE BE KO! I LOVE YOU AT ANG BAWAT REASON SA ULO MO. ANG 10 SECONDS NUN DI BA? P180 LANG ANG BAWAS SA LOAD MO. ANG MURA KAYA P6.50 DATI.
10 SECONDS NA TAWAG X 10 CENTAVOS = P180
HMMM... DI BA SAYANG MINAN, YUNG SANTONG SECONDS NA GINAMIT KO LANG SA TAWAG ANG BUBAWAS SA 'KIN?
SAKTO! NAKUHA MO!
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PALITAN ANG 0 NG 803
PAG ITALI LANG PALA!
HAHA LAKI NG MATITIPID MO!
HAHA MAS SAKTO CALLS NA!
PARA MAS MALAKI ANG MUNDONG MAABOT MO!

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Gozon

Japan questions purpose of China's missile arsenal

SINGAPORE—JAPAN'S DEFENCE MINISTER questioned on Saturday whether China's missile and nuclear arsenal was only meant for self-defense, though China sought to play down fears of its growing military strength and spending.

"This comes after China said it will raise its heavily scrutinized defense spending by nearly a fifth this year to 417.8 billion yuan ($60.2 billion).

"I wonder if that was aimed at only protecting itself," Shigeru Ishiba, Japan's defense minister, told delegates at a defense summit in Singapore.

"I sometimes wonder maybe that is not the only intention when you look at the ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons."

Ishiba said Japan would not object to further enhance the transparency of its military capabilities and their purposes," he said. "Japan does not subscribe to purposely overrating China as a threat."

Ties between the two Asian powers have long been marred by a history marked by pain and disputes over energy influence and military ambitions.

Wu Xiao Tao, China's deputy chief of the People's Liberation Army, said a sizeable part of the country's defense spending was for maintenance purposes, and the increase in spending was limited compared to rises for other sectors of its economy.

"China is a peace-loving country. We do not engage in arms race, we are a military threat to anyone country," he said.

China has said that its spending on defense was increasing at a much lower rate than the pace of increase in government revenues, and accounted for 1.6 per cent of its gross domestic product, less than that of the United States, Britain or India.

"In strengthen defense development, it is a necessary requirements to effectively respond to multiple security threats," Mr. said. "It is imperative for China to keep up with the kind of world military development."

He said China was also concerned about other countries' alliances and missile defense systems.

"Any harmony China and Japan, which is home to 23 military bases, riddled during former Prime Ministers Junichiro Koizumi's 2001-2006 term over his visits to Yasukuni shrine, seen by critics as a symbol of Japan's past militarism because it honors some convicted war criminals along with the country's war dead. Reuters

'Last stand' for Clinton at Democratic meeting

WASHINGTON—HILLARY Clinton Saturday makes a last stand in her ebbing White House bid, as the Democratic Party tries to defuse a nasty supping row over wobbly primary votes in Michigan and Florida.

The legal wranglings of the Democratic National Committee's rules panel in a Washington hotel will mark the latest improbable twist in Clinton's epic count-to-cast contending duel with Barack Obama, now drawing to a close.

The former first lady was nations elections in both Florida and Michigan, which gate crashed the party's set-in-stone nominating calendar—but the states were punished and had their nominating convention delegates stripped.

But now the party needs both states to count to cut her delegate gap with the overwhelming front-runner Obama, and to ensure she won the popular vote nationwide.

The rules committee must decide whether Clinton is right to argue that ignoring the states and running their delegates out of August's convention in Denver would disenfranchise 2.3 million people in vital battleground states.

Even so, the unlikely event that Clinton gets both delegations seated, she would likely still lag more than 160 delegates behind Obama, after the last primaries, Puerto Rico on Sunday and Montana and South Dakota Tuesday.

Casting him Saturday's meeting, the Clinton campaign has laid out an uncompromising position.

"The first (point) is that the January results should stand," said Tina Flournoy, a senior Clinton adviser on Friday.

"The second point is that the performance expressed by those voters in that primary should be used to allocate the delegates to the candidates.

"The third thing we want—and we believe it is important—is that the full delegations from both states be seated." Obama has offered a compromise, and one afford in the governor at its back every number of the Democratic race, and would not be afforded by suffering a ten delegate loss to Clinton over the Michigan and Florida technicalities.

But Obama's campaign manager David Plouffe said on Thursday that his camp was not willing to give all of the delegates to Clinton—not least because his unchlaster was not even on the ballot in Michigan. AFP

Crane drops into building in New York

NEW YORK—A HUGE CRANE that broke apart, smashed into a New York City neighborhood and killed two people for the second time in four and a half months has renewed residents' fears about living near construction sites and has prompted belligerent city officials to call a safety summit.

"This is a meltdown," Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer said on Friday after the 60-meter crane toppled on the Upper East Side, where a 32-story condo complex was going up. "We need bold action ... the danger stand now in Manhattan, I would guess: even stand under scaffolding."

The crane was moving to pick up a load of materials from the street when it tipped over, crashed into an apartment building and crumbled to the street, construction worker Scott Baxtresser said.

Rain and the crane's removable, which is used to help the crane change counterweights, appeared to fall off before the collapse. The city's acting Buildings Commissioner, Robert LiMandri, said investigators "will be focusing on a particular weld that failed" on the 24-year-old Kodiak crane.

The pieces of twisted steel in the downtown and uptown buildings echoed the March 15 collapse of a crane over a new house 40 blocks away from Friday's accident. Seven people were killed there, prompting a new round of crane inspections and calls for construction safety. AP

DAMAGE is seen at the site of a crane collapse at 91st Street and First Avenue in New York on May 30. The huge crane collapsed on Friday, killing two persons and damaging an apartment building on Manhattan's upper east side. REUTERS

Burma accused of evicting survivors from relief camps

RANGOON, BURMA—HUMAN rights groups lashed out at Burma's military leaders for evicting cyclone refugees from relief camps and forcing them back to their inundated, unsafe homes and farmland.

The US-based Human Rights Watch said in a release Saturday that hundreds, if not thousands, of displaced people had also been expelled from schools, monasteries and public buildings. In the nation's biggest city, Rangoon, there were reportedly no more camps for survivors of Cyclone Nargis that struck on May 2 and left at least 78,000 dead and 56,000 missing.

A UN official said Friday the government was making cyclone survivors leave the camps and "dumping" them near their devastated villages with virtually no aid supplies.

Another group, Refugees International, said authorities in Rangoon's Insein township had begun to evict displaced people from camps serving agriculture.

"While agriculture recovery is indeed vital, forcing people home without aid makes it harder for aid agencies to reach them with assistance," it said.

UN Deputy Secretary Asha-Rose Migiro added his voice Saturday to critics of the junta's handling of the humanitarian crisis, saying that observations of international officials to help cyclone victims met "tens of thousands of lives."

The UN said ships of Burma's coast prized to leave because they have been blocked from delivering assistance to the ravaged country. Gates said in a speech in Singapore the US will continue to try to get aid in.

US military officials have indicated they are ready to send helicopters to ships within 100 miles, since it did not appear the Burma government would allow the vessels to unload their supplies. AP

Nepal king vows to leave palace quietly, say media

KATHMANDU—NEPAL'S DEposed monarch, King Gyanendra, is willing to leave his posh royal palace quietly to begin life as a commoner but needs help with housing and protection for his family, state-run media reported on Saturday.

"The king has expressed his wish to respect the constituent assembly's historic decision and make a peaceful exit," said Pradeep Aryal, secretary at the now-dissolved Narayanhiti Palace secretariat. The Rising Nepal reported.

Aryal made the comment after the palace received a letter on Friday formally asking the ex-monarch to evacuate to leave for a private residence within two weeks, in line with the newly elected assembly's vote on Wednesday.

The body, which will rewrite the country's constitution, abolished the 240-year-old Hindu monarchy in a one-sentence vote and transformed Nepal into a republic—capping a peace process that ended a decade-long civil war.

Some 13,000 people were killed in the insurgency launched by the Maoists in 1996 to install a communist republic in the world's only Hindu kingdom.

All eyes have been on the king since then, who is still holed up in his heavily guarded palace.

But the king is apparently being hampered by security concerns due to his remarks to leave for a private residence within two weeks, in line with the newly elected as-

Baby boomers' bodies hit by years of wear and tear

NEW YORK—DOCTORS WHO specialize in disorders of the skeletal system and associated muscles, joints and ligaments are being kept busy these days as increasing numbers of baby boomer athletes and exercise enthusiasts hit middle-age and beyond.

"We are seeing a number of overuse or 'wear and tear' injuries to the feet, ankle, knees, hip, shoulders and elbows, in baby boomers," Dr. Jeffrey A. Bant, a foot and ankle podiatrist from Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, told Reuters Health. "Baby boomers suffer injuries over a period of time and a lot has to do with biomechanics, poor flexibility, wear and tear, and pounding on hard surfaces" that come with sports like running, tennis, step aerobics and basketball, Bant added.

As people age, from believe it's seven, something alternative activities that put less stress on joints. "It is really important that people continue to be physically active, but they need to think logically about how to remain active as they age," he said.

Bant spoke about overuse injuries in baby boomers at the annual meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine underway in Indianapolis. "We need to be seasonal and logical without hurting ourselves and developing overuse injuries that can really become debilitating as we get older," Bant told Reuters Health.

Her concern is that joggers aging weekend warriors can back on dramatic and think about cross training instead. "Probably what you want getting into your 40s and 50s, the half marathon is a great alternative. Or, if you did two or three marathons a year, cut it back to one or four or five or 10K or 5K runs," Bant said.

Bant fully admits that some countermeasures will have a tough time coming back on their own.

"Having run 25 marathons, it was hard for me to cut back. Psychologically, a lot of runners don't want to hear that and they overtrain or even against the advice of their doctors," Bant said.

Bant is also concerned about the alarming rise in sports-related injuries suffered by children and adolescents who overdo it on the playing field. "Today, injuries occur in kids who do sports like soccer, baseball and basketball, year-round, without taking a break. What happens we throw 20 to 30 years later, after suffering an injury as a teenager?" Bant said. Reuters

Consumers worldwide wrestle with rising gasoline prices

PARIS—(FILE) WOULD drivers the fortune you've just pumped into your gas tank? Drivers around the world share the sensations.

Consumers, gas retailers and governments are wrestling with a new energy order, where rising oil prices play a larger role than ever in the daily lives of increasingly mobile people, due in the cost of crude oil, the effect on the price at the pump rises dwelling-by—from Venezuela, where gas is cheaper than water, to Turkey, where a full tank can cost more than a domestic pleasleider.

Taxes and subsidies are the main reasons for the difference, along with lower factors, such as limited oil refining capacity and hard-to-reach geography that push up prices.

"I don't know why it is but... it is heavy," says Marie Ormiere, a medical fitting up her Volkswagen in Paris.

As the pumped gas worth $9.60 a gallon, she looked wistfully at a customer climbing into one of the city's cheap rent-a-bikes, an option not open to her since the travels long distances to perform.

High taxes in Europe and Japan have long accustomed consumers to staggering pump prices, which now are testing new pain thresholds—and it would have been even worse, if a strong euro hadn't cushioned some of the blow. As a result, plenty of Europeans adults never even bother to learn to drive, preferring cheap mass transit to cumbersome cars.

Subsidies in emerging economies such as China and India, meanwhile, shield consumers but hurt governments, which must find a way to afford rising market prices for oil.

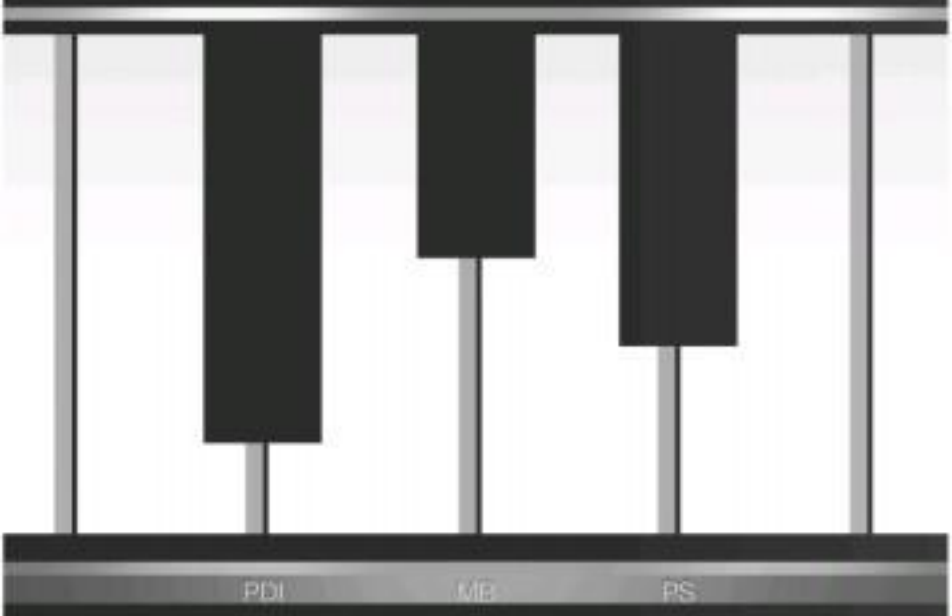
Increasingly they emit. Indonesians are staging protests against skyrocketing gasoline subsidies in a nation where nearly half the population of 220 million lives on less than $2 a day. And there are now 600 million vehicles in the world, up from 550 million vehicles just 15 years ago, and vermont is nearly double to a billion by 2012, according to London-based consultancy Global Insight.

In Europe, taxes are often the focus, since the high tax burden means crude itself is a smaller part of the burden.

The United States, with its relatively low taxes, is considered to have small prices closer to what energy data shows call the "real cost" of gasoline, which is closely linked to the price of oil.

Here oil prices have soared, average US prices have gone up 144 percent in the past five years—from $1.67 to this 2003 to $4.02 a gallon this month: 145 cents to $1.09 per liter). AP

A Grand Performance



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Sunday SPORTS

67 days to the 29th Summer Olympics

Beijing 2008

HURDLING HURDLER: Raulpee Talot of Zamboanga City leaps past a barrier in the final anemals of the boys' 400m hurdles during the National Track and Field Open at the Rizal Memorial Stadium. More National Open stories on A21.

Tugade powers Masters past Pals

Hontiveros, Seigle injured

By Jasmine W. Payo

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—With two of its injured stars watching from the sidelines, Magnolia rallied behind Loedy Tugade in the second half to pull off an 84-82 squeaker over Talk 'N Text in the Smart-PBA Fiesta Conference last night at the Puerto Princesa City Coliseum.

Tugade scored nine laying-will-only 1.9 seconds left to snap the Beverage Masters' seven-bank Finals six many as 19-points down, 22-40, in the first half.

Aaron Mitchee had a chance to turn the game around for the Phone Pals but missed a desperation levy at the buzzer.

Although it is their unbeaten, Magnolia stars Dondon Hontiveros are out due to a sprained calf, while Enrico Seigle visited a recurring foot injury.

Tugade fired 21 of his 29 points in the last two quarters as the Beverage Masters tied the title Ginebra Sun at 6-6.

The Phone Pals knotted the scores at 82 with 4.6 seconds remaining following a Mac Cardona hook shot and a Mitchee dribe.

Jayson Castro also 21 points and grabbed 10 rebounds for the Beverage Masters.

Reuven Tiongco and Jeremy Akipeng scored 14 apiece for the Phone Pals, who slipped to fourth at 7-6.

Meanwhile, Red Bull aims to halt a three-game skid when it shoots for solo second against resurgent Barangay Ginebra at 4:00 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Tornados dropped their last three games to settle for a three-way tie with Talk 'N Text and Air21 at 7-5 behind league leader Coca-Cola.

Sta Lucia, running fifth at 6-5, also hopes to turn its campaign around with new import Jamar Howell, whom it tackles Air21 at 6:30 p.m.

The Realtors lost two of their last three games with twenty reinforcement Wesley Matthews, who delivered a disappointing 10 points and six boards in their 82-74 setback against Purefoods last week.

Billed as a versatile big man, the 6-foot-9 Matthews had seven seasons in Mexico, Spain, Argentina and Turkey after graduating at the Southern Colorado College in the US NCAA.

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What Drives You CALTEX

First title crack, but farewell stint for JR

By Musong R. Castillo

BACOLOD—AFTER WAITING FOR such a long time to make the finals of the Philippine Amateur golf championship for the first time, JR Tanpinco doesn't this will also be the last.

The 26-year-old, who returned to the country last May 14 after 14 months to complete a degree in golf management in the United States, will be suiting for the ninth consecutive time against Pedro Acuno today as his swan song.

"I have lost interest already," said Tanpinco, who earned his degree at the Professional Golf Career College in Temecula, California. "The game has gotten harder and I don't want to spend an extended time practicing just to be a better player."

Tanpinco couldn't have picked a better place for his going away party. His last competitive round will be at the Manjuyod Isuzu Course which he played for the first time as an eight year-old.

Actually, it was his performance that made it all possible. JR beat Bulacan Bryan after dismissing a 25-foot, left-to-right downhill putt for birdie on the 18th hole for a 2-up victory in their semifinal confrontation.

"He's already made up his mind and I don't want to meddle in that," said Golfer Tanpinco, JR's hotel magnate father, who was beaming with pride after his daughter Anjo also made the women's finals and could make it a family victory double after today.

Tanpinco is just waiting for an instructor with an exclusive club in Cebu for the assistant manager's position. And from there, JR said that golf will just be a "once a week thing for me."

JR wears a semifinal match in this event for the first time in six tries, or 12 years after the first, when he lost to Israel Jr./Elmer Salvador at Manila Golf. He also lost Final Four matches against Oswald Benales, Jeremie Ortiz-Luis and Simonito Marchan, among others.

The younger Tanpinco never became a member of the Philippine team despite his natural talent, and now that he has shot at finally achieving that with the champion of this event automatically worked into the SF pool, he deemed it best to turn his back on the game.

"There are just other things in life than golf."

RP junior cagebelles making waves

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

FORMER TALK 'N TEXT assistant coach Manila Rising Rumor was at the FEU gym last Friday morning to watch the last game of the RP junior women's team in the 2008 Nike Summer Basketball League.

Rising said he deserves to be awarded a medal for a hundred percent attendance. He has not missed a single game nor a single practice session of the junior ladies.

"I have all the time to be a stage father, seeing progress eh," said Rising whose 15-year-old daughter Camille, a St. Scholastica student, is in the team.

I told Rising I was there to see for myself how good the RP juniors were. Their record in the Nike League after the first round was 6-2 against mixed lady varsity rogues. Their average winning margin over their opponents was almost 50 points (86-30).

Rising said they could have easily swept the series.

"The point against FEU was already a won game for them had they not missed a free throw in the end game. They lost to FEU by one point. Their other loss was to PCU which was their very first game in a tournament. At that time they were just feeling their way on," Rising relaxed.

The RP juniors beat DAU champion Ateneo, 87-28; UCBM, 92-24; Adamson, 87-28; UCBM, women's champion of St. Benilde, 69-46; FEU, 82-36; San Sebastian, 84-12; and Perlas, 77-24. That day, they were rejoined by Sallie Lapu, 87-26.

Sari Stella assistant coach Mike Advincula, who caught the tailend of this game, suggested that the junior ladies play against male juniors to get a really good workout.

* * *

Alaska assistant manager CK Kamuyo was astronomically shooting for her squad which was leading by about 20 points over Purefoods when a PBA staff approached her to report that her 6-month-old Manila 1 Hotel-bred had been hospitalized.

CK's son had to undergo a surgery at San Jose assay from the entrance of the Finance Center where last Friday's PBA games were played.

CK rushed to her car. She was horrified to find that the window on the driver's side had been smashed and all the valuables inside were gone.

"I almost broke into tears. My cell-phone, my iPod and I've cell phones were all stolen. Where were the security guards?" demanded CK.

To compound her problems, her father Bobby was not around to come to her rescue. He was on a business trip abroad.

According to CK, witnesses reported seeing a man in a motorcycle hovering around CK's car. However, no one could identify him.

The only bright spot for CK that Friday night was that Alaska's victory, which she said somehow made her feel a little better.

* * *

The young swimmers didn't win a single gold, but fighting Orcas coach Susan Papa said she's happy with the time trials results from Toronto medalists. The Fighting Orcas collected in the recently established Tatiana Grano Swim Challenge held in Phuket, Thailand last week.

"The swimmers were really great. I'm proud of them," said Susan of her wards who competed against 15 teams from all over the world.

Eleven year-old Patrick Tiere from Brent School won a silver in the 100 meter butterfly and 200-meter medley in the 10& Boys age and Nina Isabel Ty, also 11 years old, bagged a silver in the 100m backstroke. Another 9-year-old, Ethalyn Ouyido FC also of Southridge School, won a bronze medal in the 100m butterfly.

* * *

If you ask Grandmaster Eugene Torre for an assessment on the current status of Philippine chess, he will not hesitate to tell you that conditions are almost ideal.

"Till late, we produced three Grandmasters in a row namely Joyce Sismilan and Darwin Laylo, who is on sabbatical, and competitions here and abroad are continuous. Philippine chess is very much alive," said Eugene.

But nothing in this world is perfect and Eugene admits to a small flaw.

"Only the prize money is not in perfect harmony ang mga officials."

RP AMATEUR

Aunzo, Tanpinco forge duel

By Musong R. Castillo

BACOLOD—ONE HAS MADE UP his mind about winning, the other is entertaining thoughts of hatching pro. Truly, the finals of the 2008 Philippine Amateur golf championship couldn't have provided a dramatic subplot.

Uncle Manuel Aunzo II is looking to shrink to the final nine yesterday afternoon for a 4 and 3 semifinal win, then homeworn boy JR Tanpinco topped Bulacan Bryan with a long birdie putt on the 36th hole for a 1-up victory that set the stage for an interesting title duel today.

Aunzo actually wound two consecutive victories yesterday, the first a 3 and 2 triumph over Manajuan club champion Jay Yang of Korea in the quarterfinals.

A title here would be the perfect going away present for the 20-year-old Aunzo, who is just awaiting permission from his sponsors to try his luck in Q school of the lucrative money liner in Malaysia in December.

Tanpinco, meanwhile, has already made up his mind that this would be his last competitive tournament (for related story above).

"Of course I will go for it," said Tanpinco. "I have some advantages (over Aunzo) because of my familiarity with the course."

The 20-year-old, who also earned his right to try out for the Philippine national pool next week, sent a thrilling battle with Bryan by nailing a 25-foot, left-to-right downhill putt for a 4 on the par-5 finishing hole.

Bryan earlier tipped Terrence Macalanyan in the quarterfinals, 3 and 2, in a three opponent Tanpinco, who prevailed via the same score over burly Daniel Garcia of Cebu.

"I'm already used to the hard grind," stormy said in Filipino as he looked forward to a 36-hole duel against Tanpinco.

Aunzo, who won two titles in Malaysia before coming over, came from one behind on the ninth hole against Vidmar with a pin-length putt for birdie.

He then turned on the heat against the 20-year-old veteran, who advanced after ripping club-ruddy Alexis Baguio, 4 and 3, in the morning.

Tanpinco, meanwhile, was grilled by 14 strokes to the lead for the 26-year-old Bayawan, who was outshining Tanpinco by at least 30 yards, birdied No. 17 to set the stage for the dramatic finish.

A family championship double is actually in the works after Irene Tanpinco entered a chance to repeat her ladies victory in Iloilo last year by outclassing Cassabelle Pillamarin, 7 and 2, in the women's semifinals.

She goes up against fifty 53-year-old Irene Gaisano of Cebu in a similar 36-hole finale today. Gaisano, the surprise second-seed, won via the same score over Apple Pauldo in the other Final Four match.

ALMOST: Turning pro soon

TANPINCO

Filoil preseason hoops: Eagles, Archers collide

DEFENDING CHAMPION DE LA SALLE University and undefeated Ateneo de Manila clash for the first time on June 7 to cap the elimination round of the 2nd Filoil Flying V Pre-Season Invitational Cup at The Arena in San Juan.

Before both teams have already secured quarterfinals berths—the Green Archers are tied for second in Group B (1-1) and the Blue Eagles are also tied with Adamson in Group A (1-1)—red-hot basketball fans can still expect an all-out war to the continuing rivalry between two of the country's premiere collegiate teams.

Bid in anticipation of the huge crowd that will come to devour this exciting weekend of league organization have sought the assistance of the San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito.

Ejercito has already started clearing the Main area located beside The Arena's four-storey parking area.

PBDO this, fans with vehicles can now use the four-storey parking area, the existing parking area with a capacity of 250 vehicles, and the newly-cleared area behind the four-storey parking space.

Before the La Salle-Ateneo game scheduled on that day, also scheduled is the match between their junior teams—the La Salle Greenhills squad vs the Blue Eaglets.

On Sunday, June 8, the SU Bulldogs battle the UP Maroons as they end their campaign in the nearly three-month long elimination round.

Cedar Sports' Basketball TV and 104.7 FM will carry the games live.

SPORTSWATCH

Petron GT race slated

THE 2008 PETRON GRAND TOURING Championship takes a new meaning for race car slingers to succeed big on June 14-15 at the Batangas Racing Circuit, 2008.

Organizers have introduced a new class—the GT Single Driver category—which will be much similar to touring-car races while its own year-end awards at the end of the series.

Race officials, led by Clerk of Course Bobby Ortinger and stewards Bro. Bobby and Dennis Reyes, are still discussing the eligibility for cars in this event.

And in conjunction with energy conservation measures, organizers also decided to shorten the GT Sprint to a 70-lap race and the GT Main Endure to a 24-lap race.

A side event of the GT Championship is the second leg of the 2008 Classic Car Races that will showcase such prize cars like the Kharmann Ghia, the Alfa Romeo, the Mini Cooper, and the 1965 Porsche 911.

The race is supported by Petron, San Miguel Corporation, Bridgestone, Yokohama, Fujitsu Ten, and PagCor Sports. For details, log on at www.batangasracingcircuit.com or call 911 2241 / 7295366 or fax 9113331.

'Fastest Win' up

A GUARANTEED PRIZE OF P310,000 will be disputed in the upcoming "Bulk Pinoy 8 Fastest Win One-Click Limit" on June 4 at Pinoy City Complex. For the second consecutive, the jackpot is P110,000 for the sixth fastest win. Those wins will score three wins each down to the P100,000 prize. Five participant scores four points, the three pointers will get P200,000. The fastest one champ gets P25,000 and a refrigerator. The event starts at 7 a.m. Participants are advised to come early to avoid crowds and long queues.

Team Zouave rules jet ski festival in Saranggani

TEAM ZOUAVE SWEPT ALL OUT one of the categories at stake in the first Saranggani Bay Ski International Race 2008 recently at the beach front of White Haven resort.

Bobbie David and TJ Borromeo led the assault of "team Zouave" by finishing 1-2 in the Open Class of the three-day festival, participated in by 40 local and international jet ski riders.

Team Zouave's Butch Cuesio sailed the Team-Yamaha class, with David closely behind. Cuesio made it a double-kill after he also topped the Stand Up Class with teammate Noel Santiago finishing in second place.

In the Two-Stroke category team Zouave's Rotiac Macapinlac Jr. blasted the opposition, with Pagadian's Ferdinand Pulmones finishing runner-up to the 7-layman.

The event was highlighted by the launching of the son of Superlori president-pm in Saranggani's fishing haven to ease the burden of local cops by up to 60 percent.

Supervised by Assistant ace director Pil Schwiebe, the event was backed by Petron, Gold Shopping Union, San Miguel, Fortunich, Smart, Bureau de Dominus Construction, Heritage Resources, Hitchock, Camelot Hotel, Shell, Jessie Corman, White Haven Resort and Real Luxus Resort & Spa.

TEAM: Zouave's Butch Cuesio (left) and Bobbie David celebrate at the finish.

Pearl Stakes: Locals, imports square off

A BIG SHOWDOWN AMONG 11 top class imports and locals takes place this afternoon at the Sta. Ana Park in the P500,000 Philracom "Pearl I" Stakes, the 3rd leg of the 2008 Imported/Local Challenge Race Series.

Led by the US-bred Copper Dew, holder of the local track record for the 1,000-meter distance, the Philracom "Pearl I" is set over 1,000-meters and carries a guaranteed top purse of P500,000 for the winner.

Copper Dew will be guided by regular rider Jonathan Hernandez and is likely to encounter serious challenge from Asian-bred Starry Knight, a game several last week to beat Spicy in the Interpeso Union Cup, and big finishing La Tierra, an Australian multiple stakes winner.

Two local bets, Manhattan and Mr Skinny, round out the field of starters for the Philracom-sponsored sprint. An eight event, originally scheduled at another track until its last minute transfer to Sta. Ana Park last Wednesday.

Copper Dew is coming off three straight wire-to-wire victories since the start of the year but has not raced further than 1,000-meters. The Kentucky USA-bred sire mare by top class sire Honorably out of Copper Spur, is owned by businessman Jose Mari Franco and trained by Ruben Chu.

BY TOP CHOICE

WILLING. Not used to losing

FRENCH OPEN

Venus fades in the dark

PARIS—DAYLIGHT WAS ALREADY SEEPING TO FADE WHEN A PISSIVing Venus Williams walked onto the stadium court for her third-round match at the French Open.

She wasn't exited to play so late, and it showed. She lost Friday to Flavia Pennetta, 7-5, 6-3, bringing down the curtain on a dismal day for the Williams family.

Where younger sister Serena took the court more than nine hours earlier, the sun was bright but the wind was strong. She lost to Katarina Srebotnik, 6-4, 6-4.

"It wasn't a good day for our family," Venus said.

It wasn't a good day for US tennis, either. The double defeats meant that for the first time in the Open Era, there will be no American women in the fourth round or Roland Garros.

Both losses were unsightly. Serena dumbed overheads, sprayed volleys and failed to convert six break points. Venus lost seven set times and committed 20 unforced errors, many after being worn down in long rallies by Pennetta.

The Italian closed out the victory with a forehand winner at 9:07 p.m. Williams and the crowd asked the dusk umpire to suspend the match because of darkness.

"I just kept playing," she said. "Why didn't she ask to stop?

"Because I didn't," she said.

Her sister was equally subdued after her loss. Explaining her demeanor at a postmatch news conference, Serena said, "I just don't want to be here."

Among those still hanging around were top-seeded Maria Sharapova and No. 12 Nna Petrova, who took over No. 3 Jelena Jankovic was leading No. 10 Dominika Cibulkova 7-5, 4-2 when darkness forced their match to be suspended—even as Venus and Serena played on.

Three-time defending champion Rafael Nadal played for the fourth consecutive day in the rain-interrupted tournament and improved to 16-0 at Roland Garros by defeating Jarkko Nieminen, 6-1, 6-3, 6-1. No. 3 seeded Novak Djokovic beat Potsblan Wayne Odesnik, 7-5, 6-4, 6-2, leaving Bobby Uhlrich as the only American in either singles draw.

Uhlrich was to play Florent Serra on Saturday. Top-seeded Roger Federer was to face the last player to beat him at Wimbledon—in 2002—Mario Ancic.

The women's draw lost plenty of star power with the eliminations of the Williams sisters. They have combined to win 14 Grand Slam titles (but none here as by previous versions who have put in much younger quarterfinal.

"It's never fun," Venus said. "I never get used to losing. I don't think anyone gets used to losing."

Serena Williams, who played the day's first match on Court Suzanne Lenglen, outserved only one of seven break-point chances and was 0-for-5 in the second set. She repeatedly ran up points but failed to finish them, losing 14 of 21 at the net.

"There are a lot of things I would try to do different, but you can't reverse time," Williams said.

When she fell behind she turned up the volume, grunting with almost every shot and screaming in exhilaration when she hit a winner. But she was unable to rally, and forehands kept her ouside down the stretch.

AP

Patrombon, Guba triumph

OLONGAPO CITY—JASON PATROMBON and Martina Guba emerged as double champions in the inaugural Dhaka Gordon Cup age-group tennis championships which ended yesterday at the Subic Bay International Sports Center at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

The 15-year-old Patrombon, a native of Bigan City, overpowered Juan Fidel Depin, 6-0, 6-2, in the 14-under finals, then returned to pummel Prentick Alma in the 16-under finals, 6-2, 6-2, in the week-long tournament sponsored by the Philippine Tennis Authority.

Guba, Subic finals standard CSS, downed Mary Rizza, 6-4, 6-3, in the girls' 16-under finals before adding the 14-under title by beating 14-under sidekicker Shaniah Ochoco, 6-2, 6-2.

Jayvee Mendoza of the Subic Bay Tennis Academy bagged the 12-under plum by whipping Vince Galan, 6-1, 6-1, while Dale Oliveros outfought Vince Solar, 6-4, 6-4, in the 10-and-under class. Kim Revelo regulated Angela Sarigo in the 12-under finals.

Dasta Cup session Marcio Maa heads the organizing committee composed of Edith Mendoza, Hoda Martinez and Fausto Serrano.

Track gems by FEU's Ulboc, Ducusin

By Cedrik P. Tapao

OMNIUM. Fourdin of Philippine Air Force prepares to throw the javelin.

JAE DAVIES UNIVERSITY'S CLARIsopher Ulboc Jr. paired up two more gold medals yesterday to grab top individual honors while teammate Arthur Dennis provided the biggest upset of the National Track and Field Open Championships at the sun-baked Rizal Memorial Stadium.

Tipped as the best opponent to long-distance specialist Edwardo Bermudez, the 17-year-old Ulboc showed his tremendous potential in ruling the juniors' 10,000-meter race by clocking in at 31 minutes, 26.6 seconds, before topping the 1,500m in 4:11.40.

"This is just a product of our regular training in FEU," said the Tanguli City, Misamis Occidental runner in Filipino, who also bagged trophies in the 5000m and 3000m steeplechase backstroke.

"He is our next Hauteserina," FEU coach Benito Arcilaya said of Ulboc, who is expected to be included in the RP team to the Asian Junior Track and Field Championships in September in the middle of June.

A member of the national training pool, Ducusin, winner of the meet's 800m in 1:55.28 Friday, stole the thunder from Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Near Herrera and a pair of Bicolano Sear Bermejo and Jayson Gonzaga.

Ducusin, a graduating student of the Philippine Sports Commission.

Encountering all his strength in the final 400m, Ducusin rallied to finish the race in 4:00.04, beating Gil Ramon Ilyan Wendoloso (4:01.04) and Lee Jayson Andrew Gonzaga (4:01.05).

Ulboc (4:03.41) and erstwhile basketball, BAP's Herrera (4:05.38).

"It was a great challenge, especially with foreigners in the field, but I just ran at my normal pace," said the 22-year-old Ducusin, who opted to stop with the middle of the pack in the early part of the race.

Julius Hontiveros, the Thailand-born-but-Team Games ability champion, accounted for two of the finished Philippine the three-squad's lone golds presenting. Hontiveros bagged the gold in his pet event in the 21-24 category, before overwhelming the 5000 in the 2000m (21.46).

Hontiveros' teammate, 2007 SEA Games double-silver winner Julius Severosa took top honors in the men's 10,000m in 31 minutes 29 seconds, while dented Herrera, who settled for the silver in his favorite hammer throw, and became in shotput, grabbed the discus gold with a 44.47-meter heave.

Nonos also made its presence felt as Bo-Dee-yoking stunned top foul hope Joebert Delliente in the men's triple jump. He leaped to 16.22m for the gold, followed by Benigno Manning (15.49) and Delliente (15.31m). Baron's other gold came from Chel Mit-Jong, who sailed the 1500m in 4:22.33, beating Mercedita Marigold (4:41.05).

Intact Adamson targets Shakey's V-League repeat

By Cedrik P. Tapao

THE ADAMSON Lady Falcons hope to savor another celebration in the next Shakey's tournament.

ADAMSON UNIVERSITY'S SHAkey's V-League championship-ruling crew will be back for a crack at back-to-back crowns when the new and conference of the league's fifth season takes off in October.

"For sure, our team will be intact," Lady Falcons coach Minerva Dulce Pante said a day after bagging the crown with a sweep over the best-of-three finals series against the former Lady Eagles Friday at The Arena in San Juan.

"And we will be ready for whatever challenge the other teams will pose for us."

Aside from perennial powerhouses San Sebastian, De Ramos and Lyceum, the Lady Falcons will need to overcome University of Santo Tomas and De La Salle University—that is if the two-time V-League champions enter the tournament once the guest-foreigner rule is scrapped from the conference.

For now, though, Pante wants the Lady Falcons to savor their victory and take a well-deserved break. "I'm proud of them. They deserve the win. After all, we've been playing nonstop over the past few months."

Despite winning their first two games, the Adamson coach thinks her team, known for its tough-as-nails floor defense, peaked just in time for the V-League championship duel with Arenas, which pulled off a pair of come-from-behind victories to reach the Finals.

Pante said the turning point of their campaign came in the straight-set win vs San Sebastian, 25-22, 25-19, 25-16, last May 3 that prevented them from sweeping the elimination.

"That loss allowed us to take a step back and evaluate our performances. It made us stronger," she said.

From another stunning setback at the hands of Lyceum that stalled their finals bid, the Lady Falcons responded by unleashing their finest game of the tournament in beating San Sebastian, 25-17, 25-19, 21-25, 25-21 in a knockout match for the last championship berth.

Streaking Go, Tiu eye drag racing wins

THE COUNTRY'S FASTEST DRIVERS RESUME their quest for the titles at stake in the sixth leg of the the 2008 Sun-Bay Coffee Drag Racing Championship set June 7 at the Batangas Racing Circuit Drag Strip.

Defending champions Jonathan Tio of Bacoor is hoping to spring another big triumph on the Quick 8 division to firm up his hold of solo leadership in the series.

Tio now holds a total of 80 points following his big comeback in the last leg and is forming up to speed for a back-to-back Drag Racing Driver of the Year awards. He is eight points ahead of defending Pro Automobile Association Philippines.

Tio's closest rival for the championship is Dy Imanuel aka Anthony Go, who leads the Pro Class with 68 points on just two points behind Tio. Go, who is been showing consistency in the past four legs, is seeking his fourth victory.

Also expected to be in their respective divisions are Paul Henderson Perez riding Racing Loop Motorbike of Mandaluyong and Eli Glen D'Group 81.

Perez is hoping for a repeat over Mark Geronimo of PAMA Automotive and Jane Evangelista of the Expert class.

For inquiries, interested parties may log on at www.batangasracingcircuit.com or contact the Batangas Racing Circuit on BRC Operations Manager Rodel Rivera or Bobbie Bayuka at (632) 8 637-2504 / 0920-966-66-66 or fax at 631-241 for details.

TRIUMPH AND ART. Renowned painter Manny Casilang (left) presents to Mikee Romero, the owner of 2008 Asian Cup PBA champion Barbour Centro, a painting symbolizing the Batang Pier's historic title encounter championship. The "five-peat" has earned Sean Romero the 25 years of the PBA. Sir Boy's masterpiece, entitled "Triangulo," is his tribute to the Batang Pier's efforts. Mayolen Alex Gutierrez and Hangarin emphasizes the young cagers' achievement.

Solar unveils full Olympic program

SOLAR SPORTS HAS BEEN HOME FOR THE FIRST time on unparalleled, 24/7 coverage of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China this coming August.

Flagship carrier Solar Sports spearheads a total of six channels that will carry the action of this year's Summer Games straight from the Chinese capital.

Aside from Solar, also airing the quadrennial event mainly dubbed as "The greatest show on earth" are basketball TV (BTV), Crime and Suspense, ETC, Jack Television and Jack TV.

All these channels will broadcast the Olympic Games every hour of the day—a first in Philippine television...for the duration of the event that starts on Aug. 8.

Solar Sports will focus on showing four key sports events namely, swimming, volleyball, gymnastics and athletics.

Kobe Paras and the rest of Team USA will be seen on BTV as Olympic basketball games the channel simulcast over CS Sports (MVS).

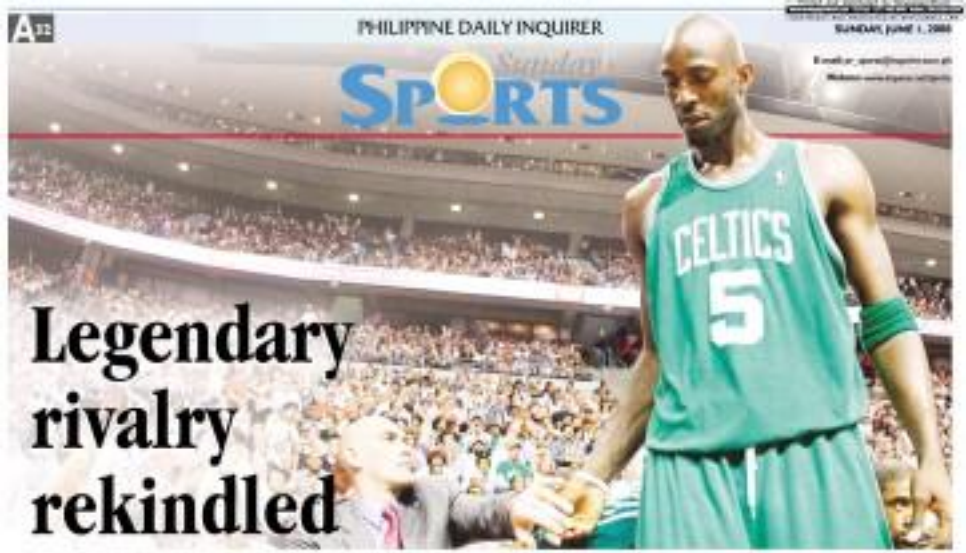
Bryant honors the highly-touted Americans as they clash with Yao Ming and the rest of China during the opening round of the cage event beginning Aug. 10.

Aside from basketball, CS will also air tennis, badminton and boxing.

ETC will air lady-friendly sports such as beach volleyball, artistic gymnastics and volleyball while Jack Television will host diving, synchronized swimming, equestrian and shooting, wrestling and BMX cycling are scheduled over Jack TV.

Sunday SPORTS

Legendary rivalry rekindled



AFTER nearly two decades of falling behind other teams, the Boston Celtics—led by Kevin Garnett—can now walk tall as they march into their first Finals appearance in 21 years.

Boston Celtics knock out gritty Pistons, forge title duel vs Lakers

Storied NBA franchises in Finals again

By Inquirer Sports Staff

THE LAST TIME THE BOSTON CELTICS were seen in a championship series was 21 years ago, and it was perceived by a frenetic, spine-tingling theatrics fetched by the team's ringleader Bird.

"If they (Lakers) want to celebrate," Larry Bird told his teammates before Game 6 of the 1987-88 NBA championship series, "let's not let them do it on the parquet."

The parquet, of course, was the superstar-studded court of the old Boston Garden, whose foundations were built on the legendary Celtic Pride that rocked its 16 NBA championships.

The floor had been tabbed of some of its stars in Game 5, when Magic Johnson lofted what he called his "junior, junior, junior skyhook" to lift the Lakers to a 107-106 victory. Bird had two seconds to rain things around but his open three-pointer try wedged around out of the ring.

"You expect to lose on a skyhook," Bird said after Game 5. The Celtics, after all, were ravaged against Rawsons Abdul-Aziz, who all but pantomed basketball's most unstoppable shot. "You don't expect it to be from Magic."

Then came Game 6. At one point, Lakers staff began icing champagne bottles in preparation for a celebration. But all throughout the game, Bird's inspirational call gave the aging and weary Celtics squad—which plodded the ball route of a seven-game series victor in the Eastern Conference playoffs—added juice against the Lakers.

Danny Ainge was specifically hot, hitting five of six from beyond the arc ("Range Range," a commentator called it) and the Celtics cruised to a 123-109 victory to stun the Lakers' series lead to 3-2.

Worst opening half

Boston nearly stretched the series to the distance, leading 38-31 at halftime of a game where Abdul-Jabbar came out with a newly-shaved head. But the Celtics fared a Lakers squad that played probably its worst opening half of the series.

Johnson, rusher, only had four points after two periods. But the Lakers bounced back to the second half. At the final buzzer, Abdul-Jabbar finished with 32 points, six rebounds and four blocks, James Worthy added 22 and Finals MVP Johnson had 16 points, 19 assists and eight rebounds as the Lakers won, 106-93.

Bird acknowledged that Johnson was "the best floor general ever to be Boston's playing field with, given to creating time, calling the Los Angeles star "genie, great basketball player. The best I've ever seen."

In scenes too and told-over scenes highlighting crowd cheers, the Lakers and the Celtics are, as it appears, rewriting what is perhaps the NBA's most storied rivalry.

(Source: http://www.nba.com/celtics/history/finals_198687.html)

After being forced to fatten 17 wins in the playoffs, the Celtics will get a welcome break before hosting Kobe Bryant and the Lakers on Thursday.

"We're enormously drained," Kevin Garnett said.

Detroit's Chauncey Billups scored a playoff-high 29 points, but made all the rest of the team had lackluster efforts—especially Rasheed Wallace in one game Billups lost 23 points, matching the total for the rest of the team.

Wallace scored just four points on 2-of-12 shooting and had three turnovers in what might've been his last game as a Piston and possibly even Hip Hawkins' last in Detroit's coach. President of basketball operations Joe Dumars will likely make some sort of changes on the bench, the roster or both.

"I'm sure that's something Joe and I will sit down and evaluate," Saunders said.

After it was 58-all, Detroit closed the third quarter with a 10-2 run and took its first lead since midway through the opening quarter.

Just when it seemed the Pistons might be in control with a 78-60 lead early in the fourth, the Celtics served nine points in less than two minutes and went on a 19-4 run that put three ahead, 79-74.

"It was the best fourth quarter we played all playoff long," Brad Pierce said.

The Pistons bolted out their three-pointers down the stretch and couldn't take advantage of Garnett missing two free throws with 46 seconds left.

Detroit lost Game 6 of the conference finals for the third straight year and with only one win and one blowout deaths appearances during its magnificent six-year run, the team may be putting out of chances to symbolize on this playing group.

The Celtics, meanwhile, validated their bold and expensive move of adding Garnett and Ray Allen to a squad that had a major star in Pierce, who was with the Boston team that won just 33 games the previous year.

"I just remember being at the bottom of the totem and wondering how I was going to get back to the top," said Pierce, who scored 12 of his points in the fourth quarter. "What a difference a year makes."

The Celtics also got a boost from key players down the stretch from Rajon Rondo and Leonard Powe.

Rondo hit a 20-foot jump shot to open up a seven-point lead with 2:34 left to the game.

Less than a minute later, Powe a free agent the Celtics also picked up last year after Sean Sebald to assist the ball from Tayshaun Prince, setting any remaining momentum for Detroit with it.

Patrick Ewing deliberately was phenomenal and Rajon Rondo a big shot for us," said Celtics coach Doc Rivers.

He added: "I guess if you're going to go to the Finals, I don't know if you could script a better way than the way we're going."

AP, Reuters

'These are no longer the same two teams'

PHOGE: Big Pierce reminisces

SERVANT: Lakers leader

AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN—The Celtics easily won both regular-season meetings with the Western Conference champion Lakers. So what does that mean when they meet in the NBA Finals?

Not much.

A Celtics-Lakers matchup will be completely different because there are too many major pieces involved now than weren't involved during the regular-season meetings.

"It has no bearing on the situation whether it's something common or ancient," said of the Lakers's west," Ray Allen said Friday point to the Celtics eliminating the Orlando, 89-81, in Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals. "Really it would be no playing a different team."

And the team now includes center Pau Gasol, who was traded mid-season trade from Memphis. He wasn't with the Lakers when they played the Celtics.

On the Celtics' side, Sam Cassell was with the Clippers in the time of both games, and 39 Brown was a free agent.

Furthermore, the Celtics and Lakers have not seen each other in five months. The Celtics won the first meeting, 107-94, at TD Banknorth Garden Nov. 23, and took the second game, 113-93, in Los Angeles Dec. 30.

"What you do in the regular season with teams doesn't matter," said Cassell, who was traded to the with Houston. "Essentially, (when) we swept Orlando (in the 1995 Finals), they beat us both times in the regular season by scores of almost 15 and 17 points. And we swept them in the Finals."

The Celtics will again lean on the big Pierce and Paul Pierce, Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen while Rajon Rivers will be at the helm of the Lakers' charge.

Cassell said prior to Friday night's game that a Celtics-Lakers final would be "good for everyone.

"It would be real sweet to play against the Lakers. It would also be good for everyone, it would be good for the morale of the league, fans and forecast, to have rivals like the Celtics and the Lakers playing again. We had the best record in the East and they had the best record in the West. That's similar to the old days." REUTERS

NAT'L SOFTBALL

Double debacle for champs

LIPA CITY—ZAMBOANGA CITY (SWAT) DEfending men's champion Cebu City ousts an emphatic five-inning 15-5 victory in the second day of the National Open softball championships yesterday at the Ramon Ramos grounds here.

Adamson University Hondo made it a double debacle for the title defenders by pulling off a 4-1 conquest of University of the Philippines, the women's winners last year.

National team members Angelica Rojas limited the once-dreaded Cebu Queens rivalries to only four hits while the Zamboangueñas teammates feasted on three Cebuano hurlers with 22 hits, including a two-run homer made by Manuel Rivarez in the second inning.

Philippine Ida Gels ace pitcher Ayed Ramos had the Lady Shamans eating out of her hands with a knuckler while Marissa Maldivas blasted a solo homer to the sixth to highlight an eight-hit Adamson attack.

It was sweet victory for coach Ana Sendejo's Lady Falcons, who lost to the Lady Maroons in the UAAP and in this same tournament last year. Pitcher Golda Valencia recorded a grand slam to highlight a five-run first inning and Hind Pinedo's two-run double in the fourth.

In another game, Hazel Tolentino's 3 scored on a bases-loaded walk in the bottom of the fifth frame to post a 6-5 win over Laguna in the men's division.

Baseball Philippines: Manila, Cebu collide

MANILA AND CEBU CLASH TODAY in what could be a preview of the championship in baseball Philippines' Series-Tuesday at the Rizal Baseball Stadium.

The harbour Series market Manila Sharks, undefeated six games, and the Cebu Dolphins, running second with a 5-2 win-loss card, tangle in the last game of a triple-total 2 p.m.

"It's going to be an exciting match considering that we're the leaders in Series 2," said Manila team manager Jhoni Polanco.

The Dolphins, supported by 63, thumped the Manila ballers in three games to oust the Series 2 crown, and team themselves. Cebu team manager, said today's encounter will be a pitching duel.

The Sharks are expected to start Charlie Labrador with Ronnie Jaramin as reliever while the Dolphins are likely to go to southpaw Joseph Orbana, who clinched an 8-6 squeaker over pilot series in that blanket last week.

Forward Tagaig hosts Batangas at 10:00 a.m.

IN THIS ISSUE

- **20 mothers nurture organic** vegetable garden /B3
- **Town moves to revive** withering sampaguita trade /B4

Sunday BIZ

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

He learned to care from grandma

New Novartis president keeps feet firmly on the ground

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

THE HELPERS IN THE GOLDschmidt household are veterans in serving expat families—they have seen several come and go, all with varied cultures and personalities. But all of them had a shock when the new Novartis Healthcare Philippines country president and CFO (country pharma organization) head arrived.

"I told them you will not fix the table and you will not set the table and clean up the plates. My children will do that. And you will not cook. I will cook," was what German Peter Goldschmidt instructed the helpers that came with the huge house assigned to him in an exclusive village in Makati upon arrival in Manila.

He says, except for occasional cooking done by the helpers, he does the meals in the household.

"Germans don't eat warm in the evening. We have bread and cold cuts," he explained.

FORTY-THREE-year-old Peter Goldschmidt

The surprise of the helpers did not stop there.

Goldschmidt, who has been in Manila ten months as head of the pharmaceutical company, wanted his household to a normal one making sure he prepared everything.

It was not only his household he crushed for. Novartis held a Family Day where he whipped up a meal for the employees. Families of employees came to the Novartis office for a day where various activities are held.

Goldschmidt tries to translate his strong sense of equality to his children. Two of the Goldschmidt children are of school age and study in the International School, where annual tuition runs about $20,000.

He admits that, unlike the German public school system where both the rich and the not so rich go to the same school, in the Philippines, rare does one see the office. Under the Philippine school system, children of the affluent go to exclusive private schools, and the children of the poor go to public schools.

But he keeps a lid on spoiling his children. In fact, he says, he was surprised to learn that some of his people give much higher allowances to their children than he does to his.

The German says he does not know what the future will bring—whether in his next posting he will have the same privileges or he has seen the doors are worst his children to get used to too many privileges and wants them to be exposed to the realities of life.

It seems he is succeeding. He says, recently his children had overnight guests and they were children of their dog trainer and the guard. And they all had fun together.

PETER with daughter Anne, 11; wife Anke Ehlert on Tim, 8

COOKING for the employees on Family Day

'For children, it's either they like each other or not. Social status does not matter'

"For children, it's either they like each other or not. Social status does not matter," he notes.

Such down-to-earth attitude is not always the case among expats in the Philippines. While many treat their household responsibility, there are also some who abuse the helpers.

But the German's early work stint have helped him acquire an attitude of equality and fairness.

YOUNG Peter with grandmother Anni Rosenbaum

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Bringing high-end entrepreneurs to the south

FOUR WOMEN WHO HAVE been in the local bazaar circuit for years and have seen the best and worst, decided it was time to create one that would fill the needs of both shoppers and vendors.

The four—Debbie Chan, Rechelle Fuentes, Estella San Juan and Cielo Zuluaga—set up the Pasi Seasons Creative Ventures Inc. with the Bellevue Manila as producer the "Mid-Year Hit at the Pits 'Offs in Art-Fashion Perfumes Bazaar" on June 27 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Laguna and Alabang Ballrooms of the Bellevue Manila, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

The group is touting it to be the "first ever upscale bazaar south of the Metropolis."

The bazaar will feature select vendors and exhibitors and have scheduled beauty and wellness experts to speak. Belly dancers will be shimmying around ready to teach daring shoppers. And the biggest shoppers will have a chance to win prizes such as free accommodation at The Bellevue Manila, or a domestic round-trip ticket from Cebu Pacific air.

The designers and artisans who will be participating in the Mid-Year Hit at the Pits 'Off include:

Dusk 'til Dawn

The Maverick by Design Team has brought the Filipino fashion industry to a whole new level by creatively incorporating technology into their designs.

For the Mid-Year Hit, grab your own Dusk 'til Dawn merchandise and surround friends and loved ones with your bright new threads.

DUSK 'til Dawn

Laura's Jewel

Laura de Guzman crafts distinct jewelry that answers all grown misses by blending aromas of colors of precious and semi-precious stones.

For the Mid-Year Hit, add sparkle to your shopping bag with Laura's fine-crafted jewelry. Also find her newest additions: Home accents and accessories which blend Oriental and Mediterranean styles.

Dancoch Fashion Fair

The company started with its owner Inez San Juan running a bag that looked classy yet was affordable. A bag that would be elegant, light yet could carry a ton and still be durable.

She created the perfect bag by using the fine and natural

DANZEACH bags are fine and natural finds.

found fibers, found in the Philippines.

This fine white fiber is reasonably extracted from unopened leaf sticks of the tropical Anthurium Palm. Its tall palms sow with large fan shaped leaves), and then woven by hand into mats or are knitted. The results are unique, wonderful and trendy Filipino designs.

Bayanih is showcased in more than one bench and resorts nationwide as well as select houses.

In the south, Danzeach can be found at the Lobby Shop of the Bellevue Manila in Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

For the Mid-Year Hit, catch Danzeach's new chandi bags in vibrant colors and many new handbag designs that will make summer hot all year long.

Bead-A-Holic Corp.

Bead-A-Holic Corp., led by its owner and in-house creative director, Rechelle Fuentes, believes that anyone can make a work of art as long as they are focused and inspired. This philosophy led to the birth of Bead-A-Holic Corp., a one-stop bead-ery serves relaxer affectionados and fashion-forward bead-heads findings and beading materials from all over. "We try to give our customers a little something from all the regions. We have beads from China, Vietnam, India, but we also have new finds from Africa, the United States and, of course, Mexico to Italy.

"We like to offer our clients pieces that are ready-to-wear so they can visualize what or how to create." Of course, it doesn't hurt that the pieces are bought from all the dwell. "I make what I like and I love doing what I do. Each piece is an original and carries our signature of creativity and craftmanship," says Rechelle.

Besides our beads, you will also find: Bohemian bags; semi-precious and glass crystal necklaces, bracelets and earrings; chandeliers and mobiles; and custom-beaded décor. "Our best-sellers now include the Indian brass bead; fun which match almost anything, are el egants and affordable and, of course, our series of the Chinese zodiac and prosperity bracelets ..."

For the Mid-Year Hits, Bead-A-Holic Corp. will exhibit and make available to the public for the first time its latest export collection recently featured in the several Manila FAIRE. "We want to give our patrons a chance to earn some of our latest designs created for the fashion houses of Tokyo and Europe. It should make for a fun collection.

One of a Kind

Mother and daughter tandem, Patricia and Therese Arduenda offer you a way to step up your home dining experience with their beautifully ornamented silverware and other dining room trinkets.

For the Mid-Year Hits, get a hold of your own wonderful dining set, and add class to your

LITERALS from One of a Kind

dinner each night.

Sole to Sole

Vicky Gomez and her team of Reflexologists/Reflexologists recommend the holistic and non-invasive treatment of reflexology to help restore energy and balance in your body.

For the Mid-Year Hits, come up to the Sole2Sole booth and get yourself pampered with their relaxing therapies. Be surprised by how much a few minutes of massage could rejuvenate you.

Irene's Closet

Irene Prieto brings little and vintage clothing and accessories to the table, with her fun, flashy and whimsical designs.

For the Mid-Year Hits, bring out the individual in you with Irene's clothing that does anything but conform to the norm.

Jill Marie Linpo Ngo-Criscbgo

Jill Marie Linpo Ngo-Criscbgo is the owner and head instructor of Peak Performance Dance and Fitness Center.

Jill Marie Linpo Ngo-Criscbgo is the owner and head instructor of Peak Performance Dance and Fitness Center.

All Marie Linpo Ngo-Criscbgo is the owner and head instructor of Peak Performance Dance and Fitness Center in Quezon City. She has certifications from the American Council on Exercise (ACE) for group Fitness, Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA). Sara's City Workout for Pilates and is a member of Flyball (formerly Association of Pilates Professionals of the Philippines (APPP) since 2002. She has danced with the Whiplash Dance Company, one of the premiere Hiphop Jazz dance companies in the Philippines, from 1996 to 2003. In the United States, she has studied Cabaret-style belly dance with the world renowned belly dancer Aisreyn Hacker of the Belly Dance Superstars, Tribal Style Belly Dance under Black Sheep Bellydancer's Fadya Dhesmond, author of the Tribal Bible, Jazz under Kyla Cabasi and Derek Zandrix of MX Dance Studio. Aside from Peak Performance, Jill is also a Belly Dance and Pilates instructor at Gold's Gym, Ehaxt Infinity Globe Telecom (Ilo Ilo), Accenture (Cebu), Xavier School, Miriam College, Red Corner and the International School. She is the main proponent of the BellyFlex.

For the Mid-Year Hits, catch a glimpse of the Peak Dancers as they entertain shoppers with a world class quality performance and educate everyone about the health and bustling benefits of dance.

Malibu Enterprise

Malibu Enterprise is Philippine distributor of Eggbeps, Crackle Beads & Monchichi Bonbon. These products are available at fine gift shops abroad such as the Museum of Modern Art's MoMA Store in New York and Los Angeles. Recently, the Eggbeps was part of an exhibit in Paris, France.

Hosted by Jean Fernando, she proves that everyone has a green thumb.

The Eggbeps looks and feels like an extra large egg, but crack its top and discover a garden ready to grow. For the Mid-Year Hits, Malibu Enterprise will discuss the benefits of gardening in every person and well-being. Check out the many different herbs and flowers that can be grown right in your own cubicle!

Isabel

Isabel, a sultry and feminine ballet wear line that was launched in October last year, is targeted to young working professionals who want timeless style, quality and unique fabric at a reasonable price.

Isabel, is designed by Isabel R. Lopez, who used to work for a magazine before joining them. Cosmetic Inc. and Istanbul Textiles and searches for the Philippines and Thailand. She finally decided to go back to designing and produced her first solo line.

For the Mid-Year Hits, Isabel will introduce her second collection for summer 2008. It is a collection that reminisces one of bright and carefree days—"La vie Bohème" it is filled with feminine silhouettes in earth colors with hints of blues and pinks in chiffon, cotton, knit and silk charmeuse fabrics.

TOP Living

Have you ever found yourself in search of "that one piece" of furniture?

That was the same dilemma TOP owners, husband and wife team, Lizi and Rowena de Jesus, faced when they completed their house a year ago. They had difficulty in finding "that one piece" of furniture that would complement their lifestyle and taste.

The search for "that one piece" gave birth to TOP Living. Having been to the export business for almost 15 years and having participated in international trade shows here and abroad, they decided to open a store.

Creatively combining indigenous fabrics and other local materials such as abaca, raffia and wrap-ring, TOP offers a mix of the new and familiar, the retro and the modern, the casual and the formal. TOP has a

TOP Living furniture

VCO-BASED Soda products

ology in Seremban.

La Huerta Michelena

La Huerta Michelena is an offshoot of Hacienda Majana, a farm founded in 1860 by the late Señor Marcelino A. Michelena. It has been in operation since the 1920s dealing in succulent coconut products, especially its copra. It is located at Majana, Dasol, Bolinao on the foothills of the active Balungao Volcano.

A small portion of the hacienda, approximately 200 hectares, is dedicated to production of virgin coconut oil. The quality of the VCO of La Huerta Michelena can be attributed to the rich volcanic soil unspoiled by fertilizers or pesticides.

La Huerta Michelena entrenched in field in the beauty and wellness industry by developing the all natural, VCO-based Soda products.

For more information, e-mail at lahuertamm_ord@yahoo.com and call or text 0920-6324202.

He learned about caring from his grandma

From page B1

"WE CELEBRATE Family Day to let our families know the other side of Meralco, that it is not just a cutting company but a caring one as well," Bobbenhotti said.

Alice Ginsberg Industrial and Business Sociology from the University of Munich. Goldschmidt learned to care for others—and their needs for satisfaction—in healthcare, the industry he has been in the past 20 years.

After university studies, Germann have to serve in the military and civil service for about two years. Goldschmidt opted to do civil service and worked with the Struktur Welfare Association, a home help and care organization providing ambulant patient care. He would go out daily to visit sick people and help in their social and emotional needs.

"I liked it very much. In the university you are not in touch with sick people. But outside, you deal with them. I liked doing work for people," he said.

In 1998 he joined Aventis AG Germany, which eventually merged with Novartis. He was involved in market research for Celebrex Benelux, a very popular source of calcium in the 1990s.

The time that he lived a good part of his adult life in the second floor of their family home with his grandmother must have helped Goldschmidt in caring for others. But a big influence in him was the attitude of his grandmother of never complaining.

"My grandmother raised a kid alone because her husband fought and died during the Second World War. She could not go during the last ten years of her life. She had breast cancer but I never heard her complain. She died at the age of 92," he said.

It was from her maternal grandmother that he learned how to cook. And it was he who accompanied her to fulfill her last wish—to go to the place where his grandfather died during the war.

So, as a young university graduate in the early 1980s, Goldschmidt, with a group of 70- to 80-year-old ladies, all friends of his grandmother, went to Pushkin in Russia where his grandfather died.

But he says it was not a sad trip. It was happy and a bit cute.

Goldschmidt says he chose the Philippines.

"Business-wise, it looks interesting. It's a growth economy. Europe is a decreasing market," he says of his posting in Manila.

He adds that he did not really have an opinion of the country but the "numbers were convincing."

Novartis has its headquarters in Basel, Switzerland. It operates in 140 countries and employs 98,000 employees. Healthcare solutions provided by Novartis include innovative medicines, high-quality low-cost generic drugs, disease-preventing vaccines and diagnostic tools, and consumer health products. Novartis holds global leadership positions in all these areas.

For his stay in the Philippines—his first foreign post—his mission is to make Novartis a strong player in healthcare and a strong partner in society. His goal is to make Novartis the preferred healthcare partner of consumers and medical practitioners.

He says in countries like the Philippines, there is a great need for people to have better access to healthcare. But this can only be achieved by the combined efforts of the government, private sector and consumers.

AMBÉ, Tim and Peter with two-month old Lexi.

20 mothers nurture organic vegetable garden

Samasika, a group of organic farmers trained out-of-school youth to rura organic

Text and photos by Maloreen T. Virola
Inquirer Southern Luzon

NAIC, CAVITE—Growing organic vegetables in her backyard is a substitution love has made a happy mother out of Anita Castillo, 45.

In her backyard are sweet potatoes, tomatoes, tofu, string beans, eggplant, tomatoes, lemons, malunggay, okra, sampaloc, black beans and ube.

Anita says she saves about P50 each day as she does not have to go to the market anymore for fresh produce.

Her neighbor Julius Gregorio, 58, adds that she, too, has learned that growing vegetables without chemicals is a worthwhile pursuit.

The two women are among 20 dwellers of Ciudad Nuevo subdivision in Barangay Timalan here who are taking courses from household and natural venues to maintain their vegetable plots.

Ciudad Nuevo is a 327-hectare housing project of Ayer First Advance Development Corp., which subscribes to organic vegetable farming to build a self-sustaining community.

Since 2005, about planters or 27 farmers have been developed and some 200 families have moved in.

"My vision is provide residents with an additional means of livelihood with the small idle open spaces in their clusters and the backyards of the other house models," says Lynn Ig, Nalco executive vice president.

Training

To encourage dwellers to go organic, the developer tapped the expertise of 30-year-old Ronnie Samposa.

"I was hired in to consultant and trainer on organic farming in order to uplift the lives of the caregivers and make their lives productive," he says.

He previously developed another area and motivated the occupants to plant but failed.

"We thought that when we organize the occupants, especially the mothers who are usually left at home, and when they understand the benefits of having their own garden, it's more probable that they would succeed," says Samposa.

Samposa's group of organic farmers called Samasikat had trained out-of-school youth to become organic farmers. One of them, Ariel Gida, was also hired by the developer to help cultivate the land.

Gida got paid almost P4,000 a month and is able to help his parents.

"If I don't have this job, I'd have to hanggang umuwi," says Gida who does not mind the long hours under the sun tending to the vegetable patches.

The organizers came up with a three-tier training and demonstration on a 2,500-sq. m. land behind the housing project.

"On the first week of January, 100 kilos of Sagana and string beans were harvested with each kilo sold at P125.00 computed. The market price of P40," says Samposa.

Hard work

It was not easy however, to get the organic gardening project off the ground because the cooperation workers left their debris behind and some parts of the land were covered with copper grass.

"The cleanup of the garden area after the construction and some use others started to pay off," Anita added.

She adds that thorough decluttering, the mothers have learned to cooperate with others in cultivating the soil.

In the process, the traits of perseverance, patience and industriousness were developed, she says.

Other mothers have their own system to share each other. Dinna Dagan, who, aside from looking after her nine children, has found time to plant fruit trees and vegetables in recycled cans.

She says she has learned to use black garden soil or carbonized rice hull for a healthier produce.

Two other mothers, Pat Cruz and Fe Abiada, thought of adding flowers near their veg- can raise vegetables that they can sell in the market.

WOMEN in Ciudad Nuevo subdivision in Barangay Timalan in Naic, Cavite harvest their organic planting.

etable patches to give their plots a more "inviting" look.

Hopefully, the experience of the 20 mothers would entice other subdivision dwellers in Ciudad Nuevo to try their hand at producing organically produced vegetables.

Samposa and the dwellers are set to work together, "bayanihan" style, in order to plant on the biggest common lot so they can rake vegetables that they can sell in the market.

Hopefully, the experience of the 20 mothers would entice other subdivision dwellers in Ciudad Nuevo to try their hand at producing organically produced vegetables.

China's rich have insatiable appetite for haute couture

EUROPEAN and American fashion designers feeling the pinch of on the credit crisis can look on the growing ranks of China's nouveau riche to boost sales. AFP/FILE

HONG KONG—EUROPEAN AND AMERican fashion designers feeling the pinch from the credit crisis can look to the growing ranks of China's nouveau riche to boost sales.

China's millionaires' club is expanding rapidly and many new members are women who don't seem blush when asked to pay a cool $10,000 for a cocktail dress from a top international designer.

"The Chinese are the newcomers to the global market," said Sebastian Suhl, Asia-Pacific chief executive of Italian fashion house Diesel, which has nine stores in China. "They're starting to learn about fashion. Fashion supersedes, obviously, status, but luxury is also a kind of bridge to the modern world for them."

As the Chinese economy surged more than 10 percent annually over the past five years, the country hosted 345,000 US dollar millionaires by the end of 2006, a third of whom were women, according to a report by Merrill Lynch and Capgemini Consulting.

Some 5,000 mainland Chinese had assets exceeding $30 million, according to a third of Asia Pacific's super rich.

Even affluent Chinese women, without millions to the bank, are willing to spend three times as much on designer fashions, seen as the ultimate status symbol in a communist country that is increasingly becoming preoccupied with the enjoyment of wealth.

Regularly dressed Chinese manager Zhang Ning, 30, has never been to France but she likes to wear Hermes, which she says is the epitome of style.

"I like its simplicity. It makes me feel noble," said Zhang, who works in a company in the affluent power economy in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou. "France for me is elegance. Good fashion and values."

While luxury goods makers such as Louis Vuitton have benefited from booming demand from Chinese keen to show off their newfound wealth by wearing clothes and accessories emblazoned with prestigious logos, Western couture houses such as Hermes are now tapping into the more discreet tastes of the super rich.

The standard Chinese status is still very accessories oriented but we believe that will change," said Alex Bolen, chief executive of Bain Greater China consultancy firm. "We do in Bain, select client-centred dresses retail for up to $10,000, while in evening gowns approach double of that.

"There's definitely a market for the cocktail dress. But what has caught us, pleasantly, is how rapidly the customer has also adopted our dresses."

Aspirational market

Leading the charge is upmarket Hong Kong department store Lane Crawford, which is bringing designers to China who are seen as being on the cutting edge in the West but are not well-known in China.

The opening of Lane Crawford's first store in Shenzhen in October also expanded the Chinese presence of British designers such as Alexander McQueen and Stella McCartney and heralded the arrival of more niche designers including Dries Van Noten, Haremlet Chalayan and Rick Owens.

Buyers for Lane Crawford were taken period-room-by-room at fashion shows in Paris and Milan, alongside buyers from high-end US retailers Saks and Neiman Marcus.

Meanwhile, Chinese fashion editors, headed by Vogue China, have become an influential presence on the European fashion scene.

China's ongoing transition to a more consumer-oriented economy after decades of strict communist rule is producing a raucous process of newly-rich.

Their purchasing power and the growing sophistication of a more established wealthy clientele is creating a very diverse market for fashion, says Angelica Cheung, editor of Vogue China. The magazine was launched in 2005 and it has 320,000 readers.

"It's very different from the West, there are a lot of entrepreneurial opportunities and there are wealthy people emerging all the time," said Cheung.

"A young woman who might now be on a monthly salary of 8,000 yuan (US$1,116) could next year be running her own business. So it's a very aspirational market. Her first luxury product might be a Louis Vuitton bag but within a few years she might move on to something more niche such as Hermes."

Chanel is the most preferred high-end fashion brand for affluent Chinese followed by Giorgio Armani, according to a report by Bain&Co.

Prada chi la Bonta says China is central to a strategy for Asia which it hopes will account for 20 percent of its sales within five years, up from 5 percent at present, helped by its burgeoning economic ties Tsunamis.

Luxury brands can easily sell their perfumes and cosmetics in local department stores. But when it comes to ready-to-wear fashion, they are all competing for space and customers in a handful of luxury malls such as Plaza 66 in Shanghai and Lane Crawford including where rents are sky-high.

"They're even paying [an extra] last fee to locking at China as an investment," said Edward Braun, Hong Kong-based executive vice president of Swire company LiMed, which advises luxury firms on market expansion.

"Fifteen years ago brands came and left. Now they want to stay and expand. China's too important."

Rampant copying of international brands remains a problem for luxury goods firms in China, but it is much less evident among high-end apparel.

Nevertheless, high-quality copies of designer handbags can be purchased across Beijing and Shanghai for just a pittance of the retail price of the originals.

Finding the right model

China's luxury market is still in its infancy and luxury retailers are experimenting to find the right model and get the sales strategy right, analysts say.

Lane Crawford has pieces of modern art on display in its upscale Beijing store, aiming to offer a unique shopping experience. It sells more than 400 high-end fashion brands, but refuses to let store say shoppers are allowed.

Lane Crawford says its Beijing store is the first target in a long-term plan for China and other stores will be rolled out in the future.

Retail analysts are that having a flagship store rather than being among dozens of brand-owned in a high-end department store is the best way to achieve brand awareness and outshopping in China.

However, it is difficult and expensive to find good sites for boutiques in China due to exorbitant rents in high-end areas.

Reaching out beyond Beijing and Shanghai is the next step.

The southern luxury city of Shenzhen replaced Shanghai in 2007 as the city with the highest number spending on luxury goods, according to Credit Suisse, while the rise of the luxury markets in Shenzhen and Wuhan doubled.

Buyers next had growing northeastern cities such as Dalian offer better opportunities for expansion than southern cities.

Shang Xing from Guangzhou heads to Hong Kong to shop at Hermes because there is no sales tax and luxury items are 30 percent cheaper than on the mainland.

A long-established market for luxury goods, Hong Kong also offers a much wider choice of designers.

Neighbouring Macau, a former Portuguese enclave, is also becoming a shopping hub for affluent mainland Chinese following the arrival of US casino operators in the past few years.

Prada's edgier offshoot Miu Miu realise that year signed its first fashion show in Macau, at the story Wynn Macau casino resort, which houses Prada and Chanel boutiques.

Reuters

FEATURES IN BRIEF

Epson gears up for innovative customer services

EPSON PHILIPPINES CORP. RECENTLY UNVEILED ITS PLANS TO improve their customers servicing during the company's customer support kickoff, following its core principle of exceeding vision.

"Everybody is talking about customer service nowadays. But we want to go beyond the usual. The concept behind Epson Philippines' customer support is very simple. We treat people have different demands. We do not simply provide technology. We still be pressed from time to time purchase. It's that they are the equipment could hinder to the point what they need their products replaced or repaired and offer them services that cater to their individual needs," says Epson Philippines president Hideki Nakamura.

Representatives from Epson Philippines' authorized service centers from all over the country gathered together in a customer service kickoff with the theme "For Overall Customer Service Support" in Pasay. The event, facilitated by Lea de Guia, senior manager of Epson Philippines' customer support division, opened the forum.

Epson's customer support will be a pioneer in the imaging solutions industry where specialized technological services are designed to suit a customer's specific preferences, requirements, and other considerations.

The event also highlighted the importance of Epson Philippines' authorized service centers, which Dr. Lea considers to be the company's forerunner in customer support.

But to be confronted with any such customer servicing which offers invoices a centralized office that takes complaints via phone calls from clients, Epson Philippines's customer support is a comprehensive and flexible program by enhancing after-sales support in the entire country through stringent management policies, utilizing proprietary methodology to determine and measure the effectiveness of service policies, providing extensive training equipment and information technology specialists, and customer service measures to visibility becomes creations.

"We are making sure that our customers are now reaching out for genuine if consumer customer servicing," explains De Guia.

According to Nakamura, the Board formed better customer support commitments Epson Philippines' growing role as South and Southeast Asia as proven by the launching of the Epson Solutions Center—a one-stop hub that provides unique and customized technological solutions to the business and corporate segments. Seeking to double its current revenue of P7 billion in the next five years, Nakamura is also assured the importance of unique and new and customer support to maximize quality among its current customers and generate more Epson users in the country.

Opportunities in bearish market

OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THE MARKET HAS BEEN SHIFTING UP and down with a lot of losses pulling it in either direction. The revision the US financial industry and the slump in the US dollar led investors to speculate that the world market is on a free fall.

Coping with a bear market is challenging, yet, while the risk factor is a pick of stake, it provides buying opportunities as well. The Investor Life Wealth Series—an investment plan that provides insurance protection on top of returns, allows you to buy more units that translate to higher earnings when unit prices pick up. You have the option to place your money in four separate funds. Peso Bond income and Global Bond income funds—for those with a low appetite for risk, peso balanced fund—for investors with a moderate appetite for risk and peso equity fund—for those who will take the riskier route for returns.

You may just want to perform a fund switch, which allows you to reallocate your funds from one type to the other, as you take full advantage of the market's performance.

The wealth series is an ideal investment for the long haul; you can start with what you have and build on your initial investment through regular top-ups (additional premiums by purchasing added units).

Insular Life has been instrumental in providing Filipinos these products and sound investment and savings options for almost 100 years. It has over P8 billion benefits and claims paid to the policyholders and dividends totaling P975.4 million to policyholding members.

Seattle's re-opens in Greenbelt 3

SEATTLE'S BEST COFFEE (SBC), GREENBELT 3 RECENTLY RE-OPENED with a new look. The brick walls and exposed concrete beams and ceilings in the space, giving it a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. Silhouette images of the Seattle scene are in neutral. The attention to detail continues on the cubicle-shaped bags. Comfortable couches were placed under windows and other to create an extension that doesn't feel disturbed from the inside. The outside seating reaches feel to become a favorite of the guests.

Another new the new coffee shop, it added fresh cooked meals in their menu such as breakfast items, garden fresh salads, sandwiches like the classic clubhouse, and breakfast items like the pancakes pesto savory ham and cheese omelette. All are available all day long.

Sunday BIZ

Town moves to revive withering sampaguita trade

Text and photos by Marivar Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SAN PEDRO, LAGUNA—BACK in the 1960s, cultivation of sampaguita was the countryside's main occupation.

People here in tell stories of a man named David Amores, who sold sampaguita garlands in the downtown streets, and is credited for having started the sampaguita trade.

"Before, almost every idler here had a sampaguita plantation," says Linda Sevillanoba of the Municipal Public Affairs and Information Office. "When construction San Pedro, one could smell [sampaguitas] scent right away."

Today, however, the town has been left with only two large sampaguita farms, and the others, if they are still existing, have become landlocked affairs.

With the sampaguita industry on the wane, the people here are at risk of losing their jobs, and the town, its natural heritage.

Sampaguita growers and vendors, whose everyday source of income depends on the bloom, fear that what San Pedro is known for will soon be history unless town officials and residents act together to save it.

FINE SAMPAGUITA Farm in San Pedro, Laguna

Sampaguita growers fear that what San Pedro is known for will soon be history unless officials and residents act

and make them prone to pests.

Prices

Reynaldo says that, last November and December, there were times when only a single cubic of buds was harvested from the whole plantation.

This caused the market price to fluctuate from P2K per cubic, when there was an oversupply of sampaguita, to as high as P22K to P30K when there was absolute none.

The average price is P5K per cubicmeter of about 1,000 buds drawing worried days.

The price is the market is also dependent on the influx of sampaguita from other provinces.

Traders or suppliers coming from the neighboring towns of Calauan, Calamba, Cabuyao, Pila, Victoria and Victorias—as well as those from Quezon, Quezon, and Mindoro—bring their sampaguita to San Pedro, swaying the market price to drop.

"It is probably because sampaguita is more comfortable here since San Pedro is already known for producing them," Reynaldo says.

While the remaining local producers struggle against traders from other towns, the everyday lives of the flower strippers or garland-makers, fixers, and poolers continue to depend on the availability of the sampaguita, wherever it is sourced.

Garlands

After harvesting the sampaguita, the buds are delivered to the "fixers" (middle-men or women) in the town proper.

They sell these per cubic, with prices marked up by P1K.

As they work on the sale of the sampaguita, the fixers also inform the hands for the supplier dealing with those who often source their sampaguita from other towns.

The garland-makers gather each morning to thread the buds in sliced fiber.

Boiera, Rizarria and Evelyn share cups of coffee and conversation to help them get through the menial job that usually takes half a day to finish.

"We have been doing this since we were young," says Boiera, who has been in the business for 24 years.

Garland-makers are paid P15 for every 100 buds they string up. They are lured by the paid-contractor, who is also often the peddler providing all the materials a garland-maker needs.

The sampaguita garlands, commonly used as religious adornments or decorative ornaments for events, ranging from graduations to vigils, are brought to Las Piñas, Bacoor, and Antipolo, where most clandestine and downtown Bicol.

A bundle of three feet costs P1.

"Sometimes we cannot help wishing that someone would die," Rizarria says.

She believes Fatimah bring them luck—all their garlands would usually be bought and they need not sell anymore for the day.

Urbanization

"When I first came here [to San Pedro] in 1972, there were sampaguita shrubs every single property," Rizarria says in Filipino. "But the plantations were converted into subdivisions, and the farms were lost."

According to a 2005 study conducted by the Department of Horticulture, University of the Philippines Los Baños, only 7 percent of the 2,280 hectares land area of San Pedro was devoted to agriculture.

This reflects the rapid urbanization of the town, resulting in the slow death of the sampaguita industry.

Sampaguita growers and garland-makers also claim that there are no funds or support coming from the municipality to sustain the industry.

Reviving sampaguita

The local government recognizes the situation, and says that it has taken efforts to promote the sampaguita industry.

Since 2002, various programs have been launched to revive the "sampaguita town of Laguna."

The San Pedro Tourism and Cultural Council took the initiative that year by re-enacting the town's fiesta tradition with a theme into reliving and promoting the sampaguita industry.

This was followed by the "Bida Sampaguitan Program" to replant and propagate sampaguita in all available open lots and spaces throughout the municipality.

In 2004, the "Green Sampaguita" was launched, focusing on reviving the sampaguita livelihood system in San Pedro.

"It would really be better if San Pedro produces its own," Sevillanoba says. "But at least [the] existing growers keep sampaguita alive in San Pedro."

The local government, she adds, is keen on reviving the sampaguita trade in the town, if not as an industry, then at least as a profitable backyard farm venture.

GARLAND-MAKERS gather each morning to thread the buds in the sliced fiber.

DAR trade fair showcases success stories

FOR AS LONG AS HE CAN REMEMBER, 59-year-old Alfredo Malanes has been tilling the rice farms in the remote town of Sagnaday Ipugidade in Palawan. Having attended only a few years of primary schooling, he is among the hundreds of thousands of peasants uncertain of what farming has in store for the future of his family.

Today Malanes, one of the beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, has acquired new skills to boost his income derived from farming. He is now part of the Lubog Agri-based Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Palawan and completed one of a Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) training and livelihood development program.

The program dubbed the "Rattanakan Bamboo Craft" was implemented in 2005 with the support of the Asian Development Bank to produce bamboo rainmakers for daily chores and tourist market of Palawan.

Rainmakers, which are made up of natural materials, produce a relaxing sound of raindrops and are among the favorite native souvenirs and has become an indigenous acoustic musical instrument. This cooperative with a total capital of P211,000, provided an additional monthly income of P1,000 to each cooperative member enabling them to support their other livelihood activities.

Malanes is just among the success stories which will take center stage at the DAR's Bureau of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Development Program Trade Fair at the SM Megamall's Megatrade Hall from June 4 to 8.

With the theme "Celebrating Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries' (ARBs) Growth and Success," the event marks the 20th anniversary of the implementation of the government's land reform program enacted during the Aquino administration.

"The Agrarian trade fair will showcase Filipino creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, as well as the best micro-enterprises of ARBs from all over the country. It will be an excellent networking opportunity for wholesalers and manufacturers for sourcing of quality products from the countryside at best prices," says Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman.

He said that since 1998, DAR has distributed 4 million hectares of farmlands to 2.5 million farmers comprising some 2,000 agrarian reform communities (ARCs), the core recipients of DAR's convenience and economic programs.

Among the products on display include fresh and processed poultry and meat products, food ingredients and additives, beverages, vegetable products, delicacies, jams, candies, packaging materials, harvests, handicrafts, smoke, novelty items and organic products.

ALFREDO Malanes with his bamboo rainmaker

The tourism ARBs of Tarlac will showcase once again the harvest product of the province—the MRT Victoria's Heart Berry, which has won awards in previous DAR trade fairs. The group will also display their award-winning produce such as corn crunch, crocheted apparels, roasted peanuts, salted eggs, dippers and pickled papaya.

Meanwhile, the Kabuhayan Sa Kooperasyon Binukot Cooperative from Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, has readied up a unique and healthy variety of pancit canton noodles made up of squash, saluyot and carrot. The processing of squash into canton noodles has in turn added value to the crop which abound in the province.

From Mindanao, there will be the coco coir production of the Flexible Farms Integrated Multi-Purpose Cooperative (FIMPCO) from Watmas, Sarangani, which can be expanded into other products like coco fiber twines or coir yarn, doormats, brooms or geotextiles, logs and bars, and plant holder, among others.

There is also the Bagacay Milk Soap project of the Abreanon ARC in Gumaca province. Founded by the local government, its five months of operation has yielded 150 to 200 percent return on investment, and can produce 1,000 soap bars monthly.

For details, call 929-2601, 929-2562 or email phildhub@gmail.com.

IN THIS ISSUE
Immigration arrests mar Fashion Week /D1
David Nugent: Lies my mother told me /F1

Sunday LIFESTYLE Home

Its design and touches are art-inspired, quirky—the unique mark of its occupant

HIGGINS PAINTING LAMP CORNER. Painter Mark Higgins' brooding portrait by artist Reggie Aramburo stands out against a grouping of whimsical objects such as an ostrich's head, eggs, a devil's lamp and illustrations of animals.

How to turn an apartment into eclectic fun

Text by Margo C. Enriquez
Contributor
Photos by Jo Ona

PANTINGA, PERKOMA, modern and accessories from the cozy decor of Markus Schmidt's Makati-based store.

Which is only fitting, since Schmidt was one of the founders of Pirata Home Accessories in 2000. The German-born businessman worked in machinery trading in Hong Kong before he met his partner, Richard Dimarucot Bocanegra.

He moved his business to Manila 12 years ago, then decided to unleash his inner artiste. (How he ventured into designing home accessories is a mystery. Says Schmidt, "Designing was a passion.")

Funky, divergent

Schmidt describes the look of his apartment as eclectic, a mix of different influences. Although the accessories render a funky and divergent feel, the eclecticism is highlighted with exuberant artworks, gorgeous and florid pillows. Some of the funky pillows are made from 19th-century signature parts, from the collection of Diana's father.

One of the strongest art pieces is an original black-and-white photograph of a Valentine's Day celebration by German photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt. He first saw the photo at a modernity exhibit in Chicago. It is now whimsically set against a panel of black lace—a device created by designer Jim Thi to conceal the sewage room.

Schmidt displays artworks like a gallery would, grouping similar pieces. Hence, Eisenstaedt's photo of lovers is surrounded by black-and-white artworks of nudes, including those made by Frances Elliot.

The walls are also filled with big paintings by Federico Chabet's nerdy and former child star Dynamth Bellona. "I like colorful paintings, pop art and big women," says Schmidt.

One of the most dramatic artworks is a brooding portrait of painter Mark Higgins by artist Reggie Aramburo. It is humorously placed beside a lamp designed by Ilanaw, which has screw-the devil's horn and tail on the shade.

Schmidt maximized the white-washed walls and wavy flooring of the apartment to serve as quiet backdrop for furniture and paintings. The big pieces are contemporary mid-of-century designs derived from Art Deco. Belgian velvet upholstery in pink, green and gray liven them up.

Original touch

For an original touch, rare wallpaper panels in black with roses by designer Jill Morris, placed alongside tables by Milo Sewell and tall metal lamps with capes and silk tassels, make for stunning vignettes.

A dining set, made of wenge, maple wood and leather, is beautiful in its simplicity. It is set against a background of steel and subtle frames, glass magnets and a vignette of similar artworks grouped together—a harlequin painting by Dynamth, nude made by Frima and a shield of silver by artist Dimla.

To maximize space, the kitchen was renovated to include clean and neat shelves for storage and showcase. Its set sits in the kitchen, a nice pantry grid is prominently displayed.

The bedroom carries a fem-

HOW TO C1

DINING ROOM. The red tones of the walnut, maple and leather dining set, the Moroccan carpet and its splashes in Dwyane Bolosa's painting and the accessories pull everything together.

BLACK PANEL/ LACE DOOR. Colors and textures unify the setting. Black is repeated on the Jiff Westra wallpaper panels, the lace door that hides the utility cabinet, the Art Deco tele cabinet, armchair and painting frames and table lamp frame. Alfred Eisenstaedt's black-and-white photo makes an interesting focal point between the optimistically arranged paintings and panels.

CORRIDOR. To avoid clutter, wooden paintings and accessories are placed in the corridors. A Balinese statue of Hanuman is juxtaposed with Brian Bolosa's minimalist art and Dwarenti's circus mural.

How to turn an apartment into eclectic fun

From page C3

Oriental theme. The padded leather rosewood headboard picks up the colors from the adjacent Japanese woodblock prints of the Kabuki. The writing corner, furnished with a carefulness Dutch table and chair, features a wall filled with black-and-white photographs of Chinese portraits and antique drawings.

In the bathroom, the white tiles were removed to leave a rough finish on the walls. Schmidt filled it up with black-and-white photos and papers.

Little things add drama to the space. Strands of rosaries of pearl and silk cords adorn the backs of the antique-stained cabinets. Local shells and sea urchins, plated to silver and copper, brighten up any tablescape.

TROLLS. Kitschy objects such as the fun trolls by Fiona and the incense ceramic pot which says, "Rubes of problem customers," inject fun and appeal.

OPEN PLAN. With an open space of wood, glass and blocks of color, the room looks urban and comfortable. Varying shapes, colors and textures add to even traditional ambience of the apartment.

Stenzo recycled a washing machine cottage into a console side table and built a Moroccan doghouse for Walter, their Jack Russell terrier.

One of the gifts the couple enjoys is a clay ceramic pot that says, "Rubes for Problem Customers."

"You need to enjoy your homes in life," he adds.

BATHROOM. Sanitaire, the rough cement walls become an interesting background for the asymmetrically arranged artworks and photographs.

TV CABINET. The green, Art Deco-ish armoire that hides the appliances is a complete contrast to the modern, predominantly black furnishing. Paintings pick up the armoire's color.

Getting the look

Eclecticism is all about creativity, different periods, styles and cultures, and charming surprises. Here's how to avoid mishmash or uneven results:

- Determine the character of the room. Do you want it urbane or casual? Serious or whimsical?
- Gauge the space. Make sure the additions make a purposeful contribution to the visual look of the room. Otherwise they just add clutter or confusion.
- Decide on the visual peg or inspiration. It could be a powerful artwork, furniture with interesting shapes, unusual wall treatments or an architectural detail. Learn more about its design and provenance. Patterns are a common takeoff for an eclectic room.
- Colors seldom a room and can unite disparate elements. Select eye-catching colors in the furnishings and show them again in many ways through other elements so that the room still have a cohesive look.
- Bring in texture through upholstery, wall coverings, rugs, pillows. Contrast them for visual interest and plush surfaces.
- Inject your personality by choosing retro or show pieces made by local craftsmen. When gathering your accessories, however, make sure they complement the interior design theme, purchase using fundamental principles with each other.

The result of an eclectic look is a fun, unpredictable and unique ambiance without the feeling of overkill.

RECYCLED SIDE TABLE. Recycle a washing machine cottage into a side table. The result look is achieved by the way the silver-plated shells pick up the room's metallic look.

BEDROOM. Establishing a visual link between the furniture and the art creates impact. The Japanese woodblock paintings with dominant red and pink tones look good near the rosewood, upholstered headboard. Black tassels adorned with another oil-panel lend an exotic touch to wenge-finished cabinets.

KITCHEN. Maximize space by installing deep drawers and building up shelves and cabinets to facilitate the storage of pots and pans. Make it look attractive with such finishes as granite countertops or the hardwood and cabinetry in orange finish.

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Westgrove holds annual Mango Harvest Festival

GUESTS who attended the mango harvest were treated with bags of freshly-picked mangoes.

THE MANGO HARVEST FESTIVAL is a much-awaited day of the year at Ayala Westgrove Heights in Laguna.

The day caps the year-long process of sweetening and yellowing of the mangoes. Before it came to be Ayala Westgrove Heights, the vast expanse in Laguna was a lush mango orchard. As it builds a residential community, Ayala Land Premier is keeping the mangroves.

To preserve the natural beauty of the mango groves, there's a strict "no picking" policy the whole year to allow the mangoes to develop into ripened ripeness.

During the Mango Harvest Festival, residents can pick the fruits that grow in their neighborhood.

The Mango Harvest Festival is a celebration of the sweet life as Ayala Westgrove Heights—clean air, verdant parks and orchards, first-class amenities.

This year, the festival opened with a tree-planting ceremony led by Ayala Land Premier's Ron Mitanni, head of sales and marketing; Giggie Jugo, head of land and finance; and Leya Moyo, project manager of Ayala Westgrove. The tree planting is Ayala Westgrove Heights' commitment in preserving and conserving nature.

JOSH Shapiro gets help from chef Nathan in the tree-planting ceremony.

RESIDENTS can savor the sweet delicious goodness of the mangoes that grows in their neighborhood.

The festival had a colorful parade with a drum and bugle band, mango pie-eating contest, an area and cooks activity corner for children, and a cooking demo of mango-inspired dishes by Ayala's chefs Nenette Reyes and Sandra Tirona. Also prepared a mango buffet—crisp green salads with mango-dressing, mango glazed pork ribs and mango chiffonade.

Health tips and more

THE MAY-JUNE 2008 ISSUE of the Healthy Options Lifestyle Newsdigest has an eye-opening article on the six most embarrassing health problems of women, as well as suggestions for effective treatment. Among the conditions listed are frequent urination, bowel problems, excessive sweating, vaginal discharge, and even lack of libido.

Back to back with this article is a story on hot flashes and menopause, and ways to seek relief from both hot flashes and insomnia.

An riveting read is "Six Steps to a Sexy Bedroom," which says that by simply eliminating the clutter and junk in your bedroom, you are well on your way to creating a conducive atmosphere for feelings and moods.

Experiencing kidney woes and aching joints? Turn to the Natural Health section to find out some natural solutions.

Other thought-provoking articles include those on Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy, a benign enlargement of the prostate, plus "5 Surprising Reasons You're Gaining Weight" and "Top 10 Foods for Healthy Hair."

The Healthy Options Lifestyle Newsdigest is offered free to customers who shop at Healthy Options. Healthy Options has stores located at Level 1 of the newly expanded and renovated Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City; Rustan's Supermarket, Makati City; S/L, Rustan Supermall, Filinvest, Alabang; G/L, Ayala Center, Cebu City; lower ground floor of SM City North Edsa; 2/L, SM City Manila; Greenbelt, Ayala Center, Makati City; 2/L, SM Megamall E, Echo, Mandaluyong City; 6M Pampanga; 5/6 Sta. Rosa; SM Mall of Asia; SM Clark; Southdale High Street at The Font; Telleona, North Edsa, Quezon City; SM City Dasmariñas; Rockwell, Makati; and soon in SM City Cebu.

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2008

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

D1

CONDURA
THE NEGOSYO REF
THE NUMBER 1 FASTEST GROWING REF BRAND

Immigration arrests mar Fashion Week

They were shouting 'Sumama ka sa amin!'

By Cherie K. Moral

THURSDAY NIGHT WASN'T a good night to be good-looking—or at least mestiza-looking—in this country.

A few minutes after the last of three shows in the Philippine Fashion Week on Thursday evening, about 10 plainclothesmen, introducing themselves as agents from the Commission on Immigration and Deportation, barged into the backstage of the SM[illegible] Creative Center in the Mall of Asia complex in Pasay City where the series of shows were being held, and herded every single model who looked even remotely "foreign."

"Like neighborhood thugs, the agents machinegunlike the foreign-looking models," a witness told the Inquirer.

"They were grabbing people by the arm," said the witness, who requested anonymity. "They were shouting, 'Sumama ka sa amin! Umupo ka dyan!' They were frantic so everyone, even the ones not working, panicked."

Defying orders

One Caucasian-looking Filipino male model defied orders for him to stay put and rushed outside to get his driver's license from his car to prove his nationality.

The agents left with three male Latin American who reportedly had no proper documentation. The hullabaloo happened in just an hour, according to the witness.

Joey Espino of Runway Productions, executive producer and director of the shows, said he learned of the incident only after it happened.

"It's the [modeling agency] agent's responsibility to get proper documentation for the [foreign] models," he said in a phone interview. "We are the clients here." Among 80 models booked for the shows, he said only five or six are non-Filipinos.

"Three years ago, the issue almost began[illegible] without permits was already raised, so I thought all agents were already working on this," he said. "We held an open call, and our responsibility as client was only to make sure the models had the right measurements for the clothes."

Gil Cuerdo's, the modeling agency also headed by Espino, isn't representing foreign models at the moment "as we have in the past four years is to promote Filipino models abroad."

Some foreign models were booked, he said, as "we want Philippine Fashion Week to have global appeal, so one day when we attract the foreign market, they could buy what is Filipino designers."

Apologetic agent

Espino said the agent of the models who were arrested had sent him a text message apologizing for the incident. No one from the immigration bureau informed him about the impending arrests. "I guess it was not necessarily disseminated to all agencies," he said.

Of the three who were taken into custody, Espino said, only one of them had a booking for one more show in the PFW, which runs until June 3. Similar incidents had happened in the fashion weeks of Singapore and Hong Kong, he said.

"This is an eye opener for everyone," he said. "First, for models and agents to do their part and get the proper permits. Second, for Filipino models in Asian fame this where they work in foreign markets."

But one Filipino model, who is among many who insist that foreign models take away jobs from locals, said the appearance that the government is finally doing something about the issue, but she disagrees with the way it was handled.

"Gina-ramon more bumaser," she said. "It's not like they killed anybody. Kawawa naman 'yung ginawa sa kanila... I've also worked abroad and I had to get a permit. I just hope they do the same thing . . . I don't think anyone was prepared for what happened. I don't know how [the CIB agents] got in as even to leave to show me IDs to get backstage. Pang-sindak talaga."

Indigenous Flores de Mayo gowns

MISHELLE Suico in Renaro Eskid

MICHELLE Ann Suarez in Rhenee Caparros

JESSICA Melo in Leslie Rivera

By Larry Lovino
Contributor
Photos by Mike Sandre Reta

OUT OF SUCH FABRICS AS PIÑA, SHEER, sinamay linen, hemp and abaca, designers from the province of Quezon made delightful if curious 'ternos' for 'Ben Farrales' 29th Flores de Mayo in Intramuros recently. It was sponsored by the Congregación del Santísimo Nombre del Niño Jesus.

The ternos were bedded with kernels of corn, spit spit seeds, dried vegetables, even shallow fans, which made the striking angelito formally at home for the eyes. The real stars of these Filipiniana gowns were not for the faint of heart. Sunset orange, ocean blue, Muslim purple and shimmery silver collided with each other, sometimes in the same gown.

"To keep pace with fashion's ever-friendly green-minded spirit, I gave the Quezon designers total freedom," Tourism Secretary Ace Durano wants to showcase these creations abroad. These labor-intensive ternos prove the undisputed sensitivity of the Filipino designers. This is unmistakable style," said Farrales.

The 10 Quezon designers were joined by three Manila counterparts. There were a total of 35 stunning gowns on parade.

Unilever Philippines awarded prizes to several designers. Pond's Magandang Filipina award went to Melanie Adjarani in an organdy gown by Danilo Franco. Paula Bolivia, also Pond's Magandang Filipina awardee in an indigenous gown by Oliver Dunjay was given the first Ben Farrales award. La Flor de Manila was given to Rafaelo Gonzales in an original gown by Steven de Leon.

Reyna de las Flores was won again by Melanie Adjarani in her Franco gown. Her love this double award was well-deserved. Franco's blue and bronze with gold cornes was expertly constructed and flawlessly executed.

The award for Rosa Mystica went to Michel Herrera in a lovely gown by Buddy Reyes. A special gown by senior designer Aurea Almiras won the climax of the Binan procession.

MELANIE Adjarani in Danilo Franco

Ben Farrales' Santa Cruzan was a riot of delightful if curious 'ternos'

The bald truth about Mark Gil

By Alex T. Vergara

ACTOR MARK GIL USED TO KEEP AN ARSENal of "bald" jokes and reparative hair growth products at home—from lotions to potions, from shampoos to hair sprays—in his lasting battle with advanced male pattern baldness.

Thanks to trichologist (hair and scalp expert) at Germaine, Gil, 47, now sports a full head of hair. The actor first started losing his hair in his mid-30s. After recently undergoing the hair center's Transdermal Cosmetic Reconstruction (TCR), he now looks younger and feels more confident on and off screen.

Rid of all sorts of bottles, vials and swabs, his bathroom cabinet has also become roomier of late. Best of all, he's now free to do more important things.

"I never cared that improved hair spray-paint to look my hair's spot," he says. "Before that, I would ask my wife to shade my balding areas with her Miss Dorion eye pencil before I go to work."

Apart from being tedious and time-consuming, such solutions were at best temporary and, there we say, pathetic. Worse, a good number of these hair growth products, he swears, don't even work.

There was even a time he went to the United States to explore the possibility of having hair transplant. Alas, his healthy scalp didn't offer enough hair bulbs to cover those balding swaths.

"I went home a bit disappointed," he says. "I was already resigned to the fact that I'd be bald for life (until I visited Germaine). It turned out to be the best decision I've ever made to address the situation."

After consulting Gil's head, the attending trichologist took a sample of his hair before sending it together with his measurements to Germaine's laboratory abroad.

While the hair center's personnel worked on fabricating a so-called synthetic skin based on his measurements, another team began working on finding a match based on his hair sample. Everyone says only human hair from healthy donors for this purpose.

Once they found a match, they started weaving the hair onto the synthetic skin. Two months later, a consultant at Germaine's Teresa Marsalo Avenue branch attached the resulting made piece on Gil's scalp, using a special kind of adhesive.

"It really works for me," says Gil. "I don't feel like I'm wearing anything. Unlike wearers, people can't readily tell that's looking where the TCR ends and the real hair begins."

Since TCR is neither a wig nor a weave, Gil can even channel his younger self while engaging in such weekend activities as swimming and baseball. He says even sleep and the light scenes on screen wearing it.

No bed scenes, please

"I don't do bed scenes anymore, but I'm sure my new hair can withstand its rigors," he says with a chuckle. "But don't ask me to do more scenes. You can do anything to me, even rag at my hair, but you can't pull it."

Not that his TCR is in danger of being blown away or pulled off easily. Gil says he need not worry of going through the classic movie cliché of a dude leaving behind a floating toupee after going for a dip. No such comedy relief for him, thank you.

Everyone sent a special solution to dissolve the adhesive when their hitch the TCR from Gil's scalp. Removing the TCR without a solution can be quite difficult and painful.

"I just go to them weekly or every two weeks to have it maintained," says Gil. "They even trim my real hair to match the TCR."

Due to the once-monthly hairline and trimming sessions, the hairier manner did not once stack doing villain roles. Although he doesn't expect to give the likes of Dolo Pascual and Richard Gutierrez a run for their money, Gil is looking forward to playing a wider range of roles in the near future.

A well-meaning piece of advice from Sienne Torre several years ago became his wake-up call. After seeing him in one of his films, Sienne's resident film critic was all praises for Gil's performance except for the fact that his receding hairline had become distracting.

"I really took his unsolicited advice to heart," he says. "But I really did this for myself. Almost getting a full head of hair back, I suddenly felt like dressing up again. And the best part is my wife likes my new look. She thinks I look great."

It's important for him to look young, not only because he's an actor. Gil also happens to be 13 years older than his wife, Marlene Jacinto. In other words, he doesn't want to look a day older than he really is.

The actor may have put aside all those expensive yet useless treatments behind him, but he has managed to retain his sense of humor, especially when he pokes fun at himself.

"They say when you have a receding hairline, you think a lot," the former sex symbol deadpans. "When you lose hair on your crotch, they say you're good in bed. So what does that make of me who began losing hair on both areas simultaneously? Someone who only thinks he's good in bed."

MARK Gilbuts younger and more confident with his new crown.

Holy Spirit congregation founder to be beatified

STUDENTS AND ALUMNI OF the College of the Holy Spirit have a reason to rejoice. Mother Josepha Hendrina Stenmanns, co-founder of Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit, (S.Sp.S.) will be beatified on June 29 in Steyl, Tegelan, Netherlands.

Sr. Arnold Janssen, S.V.D. was the other founder.

I am a product of an S.Sp.S. education, having studied at the Holy Spirit Academy in Lucena City from kindergarten up to high school.

Studying under the S.Sp.S. nuns (both German and Filipino) means a more upbringing in good manners and right conduct; not to mention the **ability to use basina.**

Also, the importance of God in our lives was accentuated so much in us that when we went out into the world after college, there was still the inner voice that kept us from making facts of ourselves.

Guillermo "Ging" Ong, who studied in the order's college along Mendiola in Manila, agrees that our spiritual formation in the days of our youth has kept us in good stead these days.

Who is Mother Josepha?

Mother Josepha was born on May 26, 1852 in Issum, Germany. With the love of Christ in her heart and soul to spread His love, she went to Steyl, Netherlands. There, together with St. Arnold Janssen, SVD and Blessed Maria Helena Stollenwerk, she founded the congregation of the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (S.Sp.S.).

Mother Josepha was a "heart person." Deep in her heart, she was united to God. **This awareness of the love** and presence of God within her became the integrating principle that enabled her to be present to God, to **people, especially the sick,** the lonely and those living in poverty, and to the demands and challenges of daily life.

Her life is an invitation to us to be heart persons... with open hearts, to be always ready to go beyond ourselves and reach out to others.

Scholarship for the poor

Six all girls studying at the College of the Holy Spirit are rich. Through the help of the College of the Holy Spirit Alumni Foundation, poor students are able to pursue their education.

This November, the alumni will sponsor the gala night of "The Christmas Carol," Repertory Philippines's staging of a play based on the Dickens' story at Onstage in Greenhills.

Working together in the project are Toni Gregory, president; Honorio Bautista, Socorro Gabriella, Yolanda Alfonso, Ging Ong, Jessica de los Reyes, Sylvia Oh and Elena Hor.

Pamparga church construction

To build the St. Joseph Church in Cabaliantan, Bacolor in Pampanga, 40 posts are needed.

Fr. Andrew Okolie, president of the reunited officers committee of the church, said one clue is fund raises there years ago up to P5 million through fundraising, but it was not enough.

The church's architecture, as it is evolving, still sticks to the original design by architect Antonio F. Reyes, FUAP.

The church was buried in lahar when Mt. Pinatubo erupted on June 30, 1991. Fr. Williams Okolie, who grew up in Cabalantan, is doing all he can to rebuild the church, together with Honely Teddy Oke, president of internal affairs; engineer Lucito Sibug, chair of the construction committee; and Roland Okolie, who is raising funds in San Francisco, where he is based.

Right now, parishioners attend the anticipated Mass on Saturdays at 4 p.m. in a temporary shelter with a roof but no walls. Fr. Jesse Manubat, parish priest of Bacolor, says Mass there.

Miracles continue to happen as the group continues to work at building the church. During the raffle last March, three winners of cash prizes (P500,000, P500,000 and P100,000) donated their prizes. The gentleman who won P500,000 donated P80,000 and the P20,000 was given to another charity. Eva Okolie said that it was truly a miracle from St. Joseph that this winner donated their prizes.

Please adopt a post. Text Dante Salve at 0918-9926188.

Day of prayer

A day of prayer in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary under her title, Lady of All Nations, will be held on June 14 at the archdiocesan Shrine of Divine Mercy-in-Marulas Circle, Bust Avenue, Mandaluyong.

The program includes the Holy Rosary, Eucharistic Adoration, and two conferences on the day's theme, "The Lady of All Nations and her Call to Humanity Today" Arch. Bishop of Jaro, Angel N. Lagdameo, will preside at the 11:30 a.m. concelebrated Mass.

The gathering is being organized by Center for Peace, Arts, Today Media, and the Confraternity of the Lady of All Nations. Call Thea at 441-0835.

New rector

Cardinal Rosales, Archbishop of Manila, recently appointed Msgr. Hernando M. Coronel as rector of San Carlos Seminary in Guadalupe, Makati City and as a member of the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Manila.

He will be officially installed as Rector on June 1. Coronel was chaplain of the Philippine Women's University for one year and three months. He spearheaded the holding of prayer meetings, shepherding of parishioners, organizing recollections, formation retreats and inter-faith prayer dialogues reaching out among Moslems, Buddhists, Protestants and Christians.

Coronel entered the priesthood after he earned his Bachelor of Science in Management Engineering cum laude from Ateneo de Manila. He holds a Master's degree in public administration and another Master's in Pastoral Theology. He has also taken up special courses in management, budgeting and taxation.

Bibles needed

Aline Jose, a lector in Malate Church, told me that seamen going abroad should be equipped with the Bible that could bring them closer to the Lord. Those who wish to donate a Bible in either Filipino or English may coo him at 0918-9782602.

Sacerdotal anniversary

Fr. Virgilio Sanez Mendoza will mark his 25th year as priest on June 6. Bishop Claro Tagle had celebrated Mass for him last May 30 at the St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Purely Personal

Josephine Barang

COLLEGE of the Holy Spirit Alumni Foundation officers with Sister Pilar Gonzales, S.Sp.S. are Toni Gregory, alumni president (seated), Honorio Bautista, Rosalinda Sabarilla, Yolanda Alfonso, Ging Ong, Jessica de los Reyes, Sylvia Oh and Elena Hor

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"GREEN" people invade the malls. Greenwich, the largest pizza chain in the country, steps up its Overloaded Pizza campaign with a series of "GW Pizza mob" teams at selected stores in different malls to entertain customers and onlookers. Photo shows a group of young pizza lovers clad in green outfits gathered to ogle a store and its uniquely delicious offerings. The group will provide more fun surprises as they move from store to store in the coming months.

WHAT'S UP! Seemingly hooked on the scents of delicious pizzas, a young crowd converges in admiration of Greenwich and amateur curious scenes from amused mall goers. Older onlookers had their pizzas taken with the group. The brand has embarked on a series of similar stunts to drive attention to its superior-tasting pizza inventions such as the new Special and Meat & Cheese Overloaded Pizzas. Filipinos can expect more exciting and fun activities from the brand in the coming months.

THE "GREEN" REVOLUTION. Bonding with the tentacle gets a little more entertaining with Greenwich. The popular pizza chain has embarked on a creative campaign with improvisational group stunts providing fun surprises at selected stores. Photo shows a group of trendy young onlookers clad in green shirts starting in envy at four guys enjoying their Overloaded Pizzas. The group is expected to go to more stores at different malls in the coming months. The bridal run created curiosity among mall goers, many of them took pictures for souvenir.

RACERS had to run their brains and brawn to pass through 16 checkpoints.

First Alleycat race in the country

THE STREETS OF BONIFACIO Global City recently become a playground for bikers racing to the finish line during the First ever Alleycat Race in the Philippines.

Aqua Perlas, BGC's co-organizer for the bike race, organized all 33 (no-permit) teams. The excitement stemmed not only from the competition itself, but also from the unique track course that participants had to navigate through Bonifacio Global City.

Since an Alleycat race is an informal urban bike race, there is no set course for it. The racers have to use both their brains and brawn to pass through 16 checkpoints.

They have to complete the unique mental and physical challenges in every stop to figure out where their next stop would be.

The Alleycat Race was one of the main activities during BGC's Passion Fest '08, an annual showcase of various events that bring together people in the fields of music, art and play.

HURDLING the race's mental and physical challenges

Super dads and moms deserve Sony Handycam

Each year, whenever Fathers' or Mothers' Day draws near, gift ideas for the greatest persons in our life flood our minds for days – weeks... sometimes even months. This year, however, Sony would like you to consider giving them possibly the best gift of all – immortalizing memories of you and all of your loved ones.

"Time are the days when only the people labelled as 'techies' owned a camcorder. Sony Handycam is pleased to offer Filipino families our line of DVD camcorders, which are very easy-to-use, but don't compromise the advanced technology that Sony is known for," said Kristine Villanueva, Sony Philippines Marketing Manager for Digital Imaging said.

These technologies include a blend of innovations and features designed specifically for busy – Last Series saw the use of superior picture quality and reliability; Hybrid Recording to let users enjoy the flexibility and convenience of recording pictures or videos onto the DVD Handycam's DVD drive or on Memory Stick; and a new Quick On Button that saves camera settings to place the camcorder in and out of 'sleep mode' with one push of a button.

Wondering how user-friendly these camcorders are? Well, using Sony DVD Handycams has never been easier with their 2 "Easy Functions"!

Be saved by true to life image quality with the

CX330

CX1000

Handycam's "Easy" button that automatically adjusts camera settings, making it perfect for first-time users. Let the folks watch the family's out of town adventures again and again using your existing entertainment set: the Sony DVD camcorders' "Easy Playback," which conveniently allows you to watch the videos you took by using most DVD players and computers. And of course, send DVD copies of your most precious memories and gatherings with Sony DVD Handycam's "Easy Share" feature that makes disc duplication trouble-free, without sacrificing superior picture quality.

"Speaking as a proud parent myself, I know that I would do anything to preserve every possible fun, smiley, blood or tantrum-ous event in my life, so long as they're spent with my family," Ms. Villanueva shared.

"But the best thing about Sony Handycams is that mothers are presented not only with an option to preserve memories, but the chance to relive those moments together with those who I love the most."

To learn more about Sony Handycam's "Easy Handycam, Great Handycam," campaign and other Handycam models, please get in touch with Sony's Customer Contact Center at (02) 878-7400 or 0917-8227669, e-mail info.sph@eap.sony.com, or log on to www.sony.com.ph.

HD POWER IN YOUR POCKET

The Sony Handycam HDR-TG1

Are you the "on the go" type? If you are, imagine this: a lightweight, full high-definition (HD) camcorder with every-level design wherever and about the size of your mobile. Yes, Sony has moved again as they introduce the world's most compact HD recording camcorder in the Philippine market, the Handycam HDR-TG1!

Through the release of the HDR-TG1, Sony Philippines not only reaches out further on the go users in Handycam, but shows our customers that the company's business is very much alive and is constantly improving," said Takashi Kubo, Sony Philippines, Inc. Vice President for Marketing.

Also the first camcorder to be housed using a pure titanium chassis with Premium Hard Coating to ensure increased scratch resistance and lower wear and tear, this petite Sony camcorder measuring 53 x 119 x 53 millimeters at a mere 300 grams makes it exceptionally light and easy to carry around, capturing high quality still photos even in low-light.

This little baby may have the look, but the technology behind it is anything but innate.

The HDR-TG1 combines the power of Sony's ClearVid™ CMOS Sensor with Exmor™ derived technology and BIONZ™ Imaging Processor technologies commonly associated with digital single-lens reflex cameras (D-SLR), allowing users to record crisp, vivid movies and pictures with high sensitivity and low noise. In addition, enjoy the functionality and convenience of simultaneously taking still images while recording videos with its Dual Recording capability.

"Sony's Handycam that can easily be a key for those on the go, so this is why the HDR-TG1 comes with a supplied 4GB Memory Stick to capture more still and moving images from your adventures, travels, or anything else you would like to," shared Kristine Villanueva, Sony Marketing Manager for Digital Imaging.

Also featured in this new Handycam is Sony's patented face-only noise control and recently exposed shaped a reality with two of their signature technologies. First is through its Face Detection of up to 8 faces, allowing more pixels, optimizing focus, exposure and color to detected faces during the AVCHD encoding process. The 5.1 Dolby Digital Surround Sound audio from the subject's own voices in a crystal-clear 2.1-inch Clear Photo LCD, a Quick On button that puts your Handycam on "standby mode" and lets you resume use with the exact settings instead of having to turn it off, capability to record over-size Memory Stick™ media, and a One Touch Disc Burn function that bypass from transfer of files to AVCHD or DVD format – creating and sharing your own movies is simply a breeze!

Introduced Sony's My-HD to Go design concept, the HDR-TG1 exemplifies power brought almost by the perfect marriage of superior technologies, pint-sized charm and pocket-sized elegance," Carmina Lumabao, Sony Marketing Officer for Handycam concluded.

The New Sony Handycam HDR-TG1 is available in Sony Stations, Digital Solutions Plazas, and all authorized Sony dealers nationwide. For more information, please call Sony's Customer Contact Center at (02) 878-7400 or 0917-8227669, log on to www.sony.com.ph, or e-mail info.sph@eap.sony.com

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Defying time with grace and confidence

STAYING in Cora Light fashion: Model Phoemela Baranda

BRIMMING in the Cora Light confidence: Coverboy Victor Basa

IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, HALF the year has gone by! Quick, try to recall all your New Year's resolutions and see which ones you've been able to keep... Hmmm. It is clear to age is synonymous that I can't seem to recall my grade!

Going into one's mid-40's means settling into a decade with a lot of shaky ground, including memory loss, deteriorating eyesight and sagging skin. No amount of cleansing or moisturizing can hold back the visible signs of time, so one must receive these with grace and confidence.

Elegant party

One such lady who has defied time is **Baby Cruz**. Her impeccable style seems eloquent and sophisticated, from her signature jet black coif to her perfectly pearl earrings. Baby recently celebrated her Golden Story at the Gateway's Bar in Makati Shangri-La, to an intimate few hosted by her children, **Tisha C. Bautista** and **Jessy**, along with close friends and relatives.

Gateway's tarots looked as elegant, with black-and-white

No amount of cleansing or moisturizing can hold back the 40's, so just embrace it!

Tessa!
Tessa Prieto-Valdes

world conceptions on the dance tables. Laughter and cheer filled the place as the well-planned party entertainment delighted the guests. But the crown gift was a full-blown copy of Baby's new feature's Citizen card, presented to her by her relatives.

In lieu of gifts, the proud lady requested donations to the Salesian Foundation, which empowers grantees through alternative learning and values formation. Together with her dear friend, Inang Madrigal Manjares, Baby works with Infancia to offer assistance through education and specialized work instruction.

Characterized by strong will and determination, Baby is a typical Taurean, gifted with a commanding presence and aura.

In many of those close to my heart celebrate their birthdays in May. Athena, my youngest daughter, turned another year naughty on the 5th, Insanyth and Gift Gaw spawn Virgie Ramos and dear friend Emily Neng shared social days on the 10th. And successful fashion designer Raje Laurel turned another year wiser a couple of days after.

Sea of pink

STYLISH Senior Citizen Baby Cruz with children Tisha Cruz-Bautista and Beep Cruz and grandkids Marissa, Xavier and Alvaro Bautista

Raje marked his milestone weekend in a sea of pink at Penthouse. Model Dianne's 60s-ga Asuncion kept the champagne flowing and Edra Shangri-La's Richard Alanson took care of all the other details, including a party-to-pink "switching color" by Rod Pellicer.

As party host, I asked each table to give a toast to the

METRO Club owners Ronald Singson and Nick Gotiar

BIRTHDAY celebration of fabulous fashion designer Raja Laurel at Pupanatat Restaurant

GARAGE Sale members Chiqui Manglicmot, Cricay Enriquez, Marlon Garcia and Pupsie Gamboa

Defying time with grace and confidence

From page E1

SEX and the City ladies Frannie Jamora, Cary Quimbo and Jojo Zaborin

PRETTY pink birthday cake for Patricia Montes at Red Ribbon

FLOWING Moët et Chandon champagne at Pupanatat Restaurant

chronicle celebrations. The table of usage performer Yvonne Chua was with their joyful cheer, ending in a song that almost brought Rajo to happy tears.

To celebrate his 15 successful years in the fashion world, Rajo and I have teamed up with the Red Cross to have a Gala Dinner Fashion Show on September 9. He aim to showcase his awesome collection through the years and in the process raise funds for the newly-opened Red Cross Mabuhay Chapter.

Rallying up in the Gala, we will have a contest of Valentino secondy-athens, all-in-one rising up sentimental awareness for the Red Cross. For June, the House of Laurel will have a Beauty and Bridal Tea Party for all newlyweds and bride-to-be. In July, we'll be teaming up with the Lioness Club of the Philippines to mark their 40th anniversary.

Then in August, we're planning an explosive Celebrity Tennis Hold 'Em Poker Tournament at the Metro Club at Rockwell. Whoever said giving back couldn't be fun?

The one that seems to be having the most fun is my little Athena. For her birthday we celebrated in the very girly The Club Princess Shop in Trinoma Mall. Owned by creative graphics couple Norman and Mye Cruz and party organizer Angelette Cabero, the party room offers a variety of fancy jewelry, stationery, bags, colorful hand gels and colognes and myriad things for kids to mull over. There are also hair design, tattoo and nail stations to complete the kiddie makeover.

My older daughter Annika and her cousins took full advantage, coming up with colorful hairstyles, glittering tattoos and munching fruity shades. The rest of the party princesses were busy exchanging items and branches. The Club Princess also has a branch at Bonifacio High Street, so do check out the hue store for your birthday girl.

While we were at the pigmies, inspirations Trinoma Mall, we shopped at Meet My Pets Shop for some cute pairs of shoes for the girls. There is a whole section of the mall just for kids.

Spring cleaning

Mid-year is a great time to do some spring cleaning. I think one of my New Year's resolutions was to improve my charitable efforts, so my metropolitan classmates and I held a garage sale. What better way to get rid of clutter and negative chest energy than to pool together and sell our unused fashion and shoes, then donate the proceeds to metropolitan Barbie Foundation?

As usual, the key organizing force behind Milky Way's Pepito Gamboa, with Girlie Glaw and Chiqui Manglicmot as chief cashiers. We had our stroll' dress and racks of old clothes, toys and CD's for sale, and even gamely re-clock bags as the shoppers entered. My husband could only quip, "Who would shoplift from a garage sale?"

My gowns, accessories and glittery shoes sold quickly mostly bought by moms for their daughters' costume parties. The colorful tallies were chronicled in the blog of Rina Lopez de Jesus called Heart 2 Heart. Just search for "rina" at http://heart-2-heart-online.com.

Chick flick

Midyear is also a great time for a break, even if it's only for a two-hour chick flick. Of course, every female reader knows I'm talking about "You Send the City." Sharmaine Arnaiz promised the movie last week, hosted by Cine Mirasol Felix Angry's home hall, Genoa.

Indeed, it was Ladies Night at SM Cinema in Greenbelt that evening. The product placement of the movie in the Mercedes Benz GLK driven by Samantha Jones, a sexy star in a sexy SUV.

All the ladies' brands seem to be connecting in this movie. The previous night, Coke Light hosted its own premiere at Greenbelt 3, converting the lobby into a modern-day New York-style cocktail party with a mini-fashion show by romantic fashion designers Patrice Rumos-Bliss.

And so, I'll end this week with a little question to all the fashionista out there: Which product are you more likely to buy for us girls this midyear—a Coke Light or a Mercedes-Benz?

E-mail the author at sunpress@inquirer.com.ph.

TOP fashion designers Dennis Lustico, Patrice Rumos-Diaz, Albert Dela, Francis Libiran, Raja Laurel, Randy Ortiz and Jojo Laurea

FASHIONABLE friends Sally and Pauline Jose, Yeye Gonzalez and Olga Asuncion

CATS Mercedes Benz big boss Felix Ang and pretty daughters Patty and KD

FLOWERFULL Shop owner Florence Ko with new daughter Aimee

HOUSE of Laurel team Monica Laurel-Hermano and Nia Alonzo

SHANGRI-LA'S premiere couples Andy and Tisha Bautista and Carly and Bing Dugan, SPA of Mixed Shiny

MERCEDES Benz gracious hosts Grace Ang, Sea Princess and Jasmine Bautista

Memories are made of these

PRINCESS Athena blows her birthday cake ensured by Sonja Ocampo.

PRETTY mom Jessie Tan and daughter Arabella

CUTE twins Sabre and Kio Lopez

CYKEL girls Annika Valdez, Chesca Imperial, Mia Laurel and Tara Imperial

NEW grads Jeanne Buenaventura and Anne Prieto

CLUB Princess owners Mye and Norman Cruz, and Angelette Cabero

I LOVE Coke light. From: Fonseres, Marvin Raymundo, Regine Angeles, Carlo Guevara and Erichong Dee

GIFT Give party at Cibo. Gio Tarac, Ina Morales, birthday girl Virgie Ramos, Sea Princess, Belle Tiaoo and Jomel Lucero

LIVING the Coke Light lifestyle. Coca-Cola's Jenalyn Perez, Tannie Mallari, Rai Martinez, Jobert Dantes and Francine Calderon

THREE times the lightness. Eric Quizon, Kenn Pascual and Anton Barreto

An Italian affair

BUCKED and hip look. Marlboro Classics jeans, basic Hanley shirt layered with polo and leather jacket

CELEBRATING ITALIAN FOOD AND FASHION the whole month of June as Rustan Commercial Corp., Rustan's Supermarket and Isetan Specialties, Inc. together with the Italian Trade Commission-Manila present Cine Italia! An Italian Affair.

The Italian festival highlights the best of Italy through a series of events including workshops, cooking demos, fashion shows and special film screening.

Get into Italian living with workshops every Thursday on the fourth level of Rustan's Makati, 4 p.m., June 5, "The Art of Coffee Cappucino 101"; June 12, "Sideways—Savoring Italian Wine"; June 19, "Pasta 101: Al Dente"; and June 26, "Understanding Italian Style." Several Italian "fashion" activities are also scheduled at the children's division on the third level.

Capture the taste essence of Italian fragrances during the weekend of June with 15 participating Italian luxury brands: Acca Kappa, Aqua de Genova, Aqua di Parma, Aqua de Portofino, Bulgari, Carolina Herrera, Laura Biagiotti, Salvatore Ferragamo, Santa Maria Novella, Sonia Rykiel, and Versace.

Catch the style of top Italian brands via in-store shows on the fourth and fifth levels of Rustan's Makati, 4 p.m., June 4 and 11 respectively.

Savor Italian food and wine at participating Rustan's Supermarket branches (Makati-Glorietta, Bonifacio Global City, and Antipolo).

Italian chefs exhibit their culinary expertise in select Rustan's Supermarket stores on weekends: June 7-8 at Rustan's Supermarket Makati; June 14-15, Rustan's Supermarket Bonifacio Global City; June 21-22, Rustan's Supermarket Shangri-La.

Other festival activities include a concert by the UST Symphony Orchestra and other featured artists, June 2; ASR ceremony on Mikrokosmos, June 10; screening of Isetan Film "Silent Metallurgist Bruno Ned'Cheese," June 17 at CCP Dream Theater.

Get a chance to win a Grand Italian Getaway! Every P2,000 purchase of participating Italian brands at Rustan's Makati, every P2,500 purchase at any participating Italian brand of Isetan Specialties, Inc., every P800 purchase (inclusive of any Italian product) at Rustan's Supermarkets, or any Italian cuisine order in Le Cocotier, Makati, entitles you to one raffle ticket for a chance to win a free trip for two to Rome.

Cine Italia!: An Italian Affair kicks off with its invitational opening night on June 4 at Rustan's Makati with guests of honor, Italy's Ambassador to the Philippines, Fedele and Italian Trade Commissioner Toni Spinelli.

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GIUSEPPE Zanotti brown sling back stiletto with crystal studs

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GOINGS ON

Iriga City celebrates City Pintakasi

IRIGA CITY (NEGO, MB.), celebrate its annual town fiesta, City Pintakasi on June 13. This is in honor of the city's patron saint, St. Anthony of Padua. Iriga Mayor Madelaine Alfelor-Gazman and Vigueños are now busy preparing for this weeklong celebration.

Globe's new offering

Globe Telecom continues to provide best value rates to its customers with its new offering of personal charging for Globe to TM and TM to Globe calls. Globe and TM subscribers can enjoy the P10 per second charging for Globe to TM and TM to Globe calls until July 29. To avail of the special charging scheme and discounted rate, Globe subscribers just need to replace the zero at the beginning of the Globe or TM number they are calling with 232 (example: for 09175000000, dial 2329175000000). For TM subscribers, replace the zero at the beginning of the TM or Globe number they are calling with 883 (example: for 09253000000, dial 883925000000). This promo will be available all day and night, without registration required. Call 7387-8888 or toll-free mobile 211 for Globe and 888 for TM.

LRI sale

Splurge to your heart's content until June 7 at LRI Design Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati. The sale is happening at the same time with the annual festival of Cinco Pajoyoc, ongoing until June 1.

Transport show

For the whole month of June, Cash and Carry Mall features Wheels, the Transport Show at its Activity Center. On June 7, 21:00, the mall's stores will unveil their latest sports and casual wear collection. Cash and Carry is on Osmeña Highway cor. Fabian Ola, Pateros, Makati.

Model search finals

Who will be Ste. Lucia East Grand Mall's next image model? Find out in the grand finals on June 7. Choreographed and hosted by Richard Gladir, the show features 30 male and female model wannabes who are competing for the top prize of over P 500,000 worth of cash, gift certificates and other prizes.

Spanish cooking

Chef Reggie Aspiras is slated to host the following cooking schedule: June 3—Spanish 101: The Real Spanish Recipes Ever—Kalalda Mixta'aria, Bacalao, Caldo, Lengua, Paella Valenciana; June 4—Eclectic All Day Snacking: all new! Homemade Popovers with Pate with Stuffed Dates, Mix Assorted Empanadas with Dips and Sauces, Taco Bar, Delicious Corn dogs, Mix Gourmet Flying Saucer Sandwiches, Bonus: Flavored Popcorn Variations. Call 8268298, 8213008 or 0920-8808013.

Low-carb cooking

A class on South Beach diet will be held June 7, 2-5 p.m. It is focused on good carbs and food recipes like Smoked Salmon Frittata, Asparagus and Mushroom Omelet, Vegetable Quiche cup to go, Salad Niçoise, Filet Kabobs, Chicken en Papillote and Lemon Ricotta Crème.

Meanwhile, Fundamentals of Bakery Production is set June 3-6, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; Basic Culinary, June 10-12, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., and Chinese Classics, June 14, 2-6 p.m. Visit Maya Kitchen, Tuesday-Saturday, at 6/F, Liberty Bldg., N. Amain Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati. Call 8921165 or 892-0211 local 106 e-mail: contactus@mayakitchen.com.

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AWARD-WINNING RESORT

Charles T. Uy, president of Pacific Pacific Resorts, Boracay, is proud of the awards his fifteen-year-old property received. These include the DOT Best Triple A Resort in Western Visayas and the #2 or Excellence in Economy; Boracay Award from the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (that was personally handed to him by President Macapagal-Arroyo); and DOT Best Tourist Transport in Western Visayas for Island Star Express, sister company of Pacific Pacific Boracay.

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McDonald's

Kiddie Crewlympics 2008:
Ending the summer with a bang

Last weekend, more than 30,000 McDonald's Kiddie crew members and their families swooped to the Alive Theatre for one of the biggest get-togethers of the growing family of McDonald's. Wide-eyed with excitement, the children eagerly came for McDonald's Kiddie Crewlympics, with families coming from all over Metro Manila and nearby provinces to take part in this momentous annual event. For three days, the kids – divided into four batches a day to accommodate everyone – were treated to action-packed games, a variety show, and an awarding ceremony, plus non-stop fun rides at the Star City.

This three-day event is a culminating activity for all the kids who participated in the 9-day Kiddie Crew Program held at all McDonald's stores nationwide. Its theme was inspired by the 2008 Beijing Olympics. McDonald's is an official sponsor of the upcoming Beijing Olympics this August.

The fun wasn't focused on Manila alone. A week before the Kiddie Crewlympics, equally exciting activities brought together Kiddie crew members of McDonald's in Cebu, Davao and Cagayan de Oro. For stores outside the major cities, in-store

culminating events revved up their Kiddie crew members.

The Kiddie Crewlympics was a welcome reward to the 10,000 kiddie crew members who have served as McDonald's stores nationwide. McDonald's Kiddie Crew Program, a 5-day workshop, is open for all kids aged 6-12 years old. For two hours during those days the kids are taught how to man the counter, greet and serve guests and how to clean up. In between these are fun act classes. Through the Kiddie Crew Program, McDonald's hopes to help parents teach children the values of hard work, friendship, camaraderie, self-confidence and cheerfulness.

Kiddie Crew is part of McDonald's Kids On The Go program which is the umbrella program promoting active lifestyle as part of children's well being thrust of the brand.

Children who have taken part in the Kiddie Crew Program are one in saying that it has helped them relate to people and work with a group. The kids' parents are equally happy over their kid's involvement in McDonalds.

Nina Jacinto-Illanes shared the sentiments of the parents present. In fact, she is keen on making her children a part of McDonald's kiddie crew. "Kiddie Crew is there to teach children the value of hard work; to teach them to do things on their own. Your kids have the chance to have fun and at the same time learn new things."

> **"The sheer size and resounding success of the McDonald's Kiddie Crewlympics is proof of McDonald's commitment to children's well being that ensures the development of the child's mind, body and spirit."**

The sheer size and resounding success of the McDonald's Kiddie Crewlympics is proof of McDonald's commitment to children's well being that ensures the development of the child's mind, body and spirit.

the official
McDonald's
CHAMPION
KIDS

Sunday LIFESTYLE Relationships

More reasons to SMile on page 8

Lies my mother told me

By David Hogan
Contributor

I was born on a desk

EVERYONE HAS A STORY THEY'D RATHER NOT TELL. It's part of reality.

My story begins on a desk. Or, my mother says I was born on a desk. It had become a family joke—David who was born on the desk. For years I didn't believe it, until I'd find out later that much of the family lore of my youth was a lie.

Those lies ranged from the mundane—my parents being married in a grand church wedding in the Philippines—to the ridiculous—that no one in the family had photographs of their wedding because my grandmother's house where all the photos were kept burned down. Only years later would I find out that it never happened.

In the summer of 1980, I was going through my mothers' papers. I chanced upon an envelope of old bank certificates and other documents. One caught my interest—a Philippine Record of a Live Birth. In the section that stated whether the child was legitimate or illegitimate, mine was marked in the latter.

Up to that day, I had lived with another story. No one had told me the truth about being born illegitimate. I remember eventually confronting my mother, a proud, if obstinate, woman, and who bared with the 19-year-old he she had kept the contended in, reacted only with anger and distress. I could barely understand why.

I had a childhood that was marked by stress and tragic behavior—abuse. Misery, bruising physical abuse: abuse that began at an early age, from a father whose own father had abused him, who as a child had to pull a shotgun on his father to prevent his own mother from being beaten to a pulp.

Hidden away

When you are his other and hand as child, others you are kept largely hidden away from the relationships and friendships that one needs in early childhood socialization, your emotional self can go in several directions. Many cope by creating places to escape to in their mind. If you cannot physically run away from abuse, you will find some place in the soul where you can thrive until you overcome what is being done to you.

That was how I began as a very early age, to deal with the abuse of a family environment that could have nearly broken me. Truth is, it nearly did.

Abusive behavior is usually unpredictable. It comes from the most unlikely places. I recall one time being beaten severely because I had returned home from a Boy Scout meeting and my drunken father was in no mood to hear a dirt 12-year-old ask for a new backpack and hiking shoes.

I was dragged upstairs, where, before my nine-year-old sister, my father grabbed my shorts, pulled them down and sneered in her face. Again and again. I screamed. I screamed for my mother, who was downstairs. But she didn't come. I was screaming for my sister, who was imploring my father to stop.

But one person did try to stop him. The only person who was not afraid of my father's blows was my grandmother. Kind, soft-spoken, she had a bravery and a determination that her grandchild should live, and because of incredible love, she jumped into the melee my father had unleashed, and demanded he stop beating us already bloody but frustratingly, he did.

Another time I remember was in that coming into my bedroom. As is the case for many lonely late night boys, I had developed an erotic talk. To my father's question about my plans for that evening, I would giving a flippant answer. He responded with cruel and cutting—a punch in my right jaw.

I didn't go anywhere that night as I sat in my room, icing my bruised face and reading a book on ancient Egypt. I thought I bore a resemblance to the dead Tutankhamen—in my little mind the dead King Tut looked at least happy and serene. I was far from that as a tortured youth.

People have often asked me why I moved back to the Philippines. The true answer is something I have long held close, and have rarely spoken about. I moved back because of a woman—my grandmother. Because in my life, there had been only one person who had consistently stood up for me. It was a sprightly old woman from Cape town, Siargao Island, the largest of Siargao.

Unhappy

In her halting English and broken Chinese and Visayan, she made it clear on many occasions she was unhappy with the man my mother had chosen to be with.

It was because of the precious memories of her I carried during my harrowing years as child in the Philippines that I vowed to come back. To the country where I was born and where I felt the love of a relative the strongest.

I moved home after the workmy bubble burst in 2001.

Turned out, I had moved home too late to see her. She died in October 1999—which my mother told me only the following year. She hadn't told me of my grandmother's death because she was "mad" at me for the failure of her own marriage.

That summer of 1980, my homecoming, was my first since the three-year period my family lived here, when my father was stationed at a civil services officer working for the US Department of Defense.

To escape the brutality of his own childhood and the relative poverty his family had suffered, he joined the US Navy as a grunt in the mid-'50s. For much of my early life, he was gone. Gone nine months of the year, and then, when he retired from the navy in 1973 and began a moderately successful career working for various defense contractors...Northrop Grumman and Lockheed for years...he took a job with the US Department of Defense.

Bruised and bloodied

He spent three years at Subic Bay in the early 1980s, when I'd visit. Subic, become synonymous with my mother's family. It was also when my father's anger turned into a rage that became uncontrollable. I would often show up at US Boy Scout meetings bruised and in tears. It was a lacuna wrote what were on to our house. My father's attitude to children was that they should be seen, never heard.

And therein I learned that

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Lies my mother told me

From page F1

people till lies to cover lies. My mother would lie about my breaking. My parents' friends would lie about the reasons my father drank himself into a stupor every night. Yet some of those lies would hide what was apparent to everyone in plain sight—a nearly daily dose of beatings and obliterations of a young boy's spirit.

All I can surmise now is that perhaps, to escape the sad reality that my father had little power to fix his own life, he was determined to demonstrate whatever power he had over some one—me.

Once, I remember my father buying belt for Hardscrapes, very early after a pre-dawn beating when I tried, I tried to tell some family assistance numbers I was desperate for help and convinced that some should help me stop this man who was purportedly my father yet was to me like any of my friend's fathers.

When I was my mother during this time? I really don't know. I mean, she lived with us, she filled in all piling into the Volvo and driving off to some hotel in Manila or Makati or up to Camp John Hay where she'd load a nylon bag with cash and go looking for gold jewelry bargains.

Now, at 38, I learned years ago to stop asking her—why more, didn't you do anything?

Bribery

People often about lesson, very deep down, that what they are doing is wrong. Many try all kinds of justifications to escape that guilt. My parents dealt with their guilt through bribery.

A bruised and broken boy buried that he could be easily bought with one of his father's crisp $100 bills. Do more than one occasion. I remember being dropped off at a shopping mall somewhere in Manila or Makati, by guilty parents and given $100 to spend. I would usually buy cake and watch people go by.

I've tried over the years to get the full story from my parents about my birth and the truth is, they never really wanted to live with the truth. They had created their own, fictitious life as a solid, happy middle-class family with two boasts in Ana Hugo, California, a red Volvo station wagon that followed us to our brief stay in the Philippines and back to the US. There were private schools for most of my life, summer camps, swimming lessons and accompanying people anywhere with a successful childhood.

In family photos, I see three two people outwardly smiling in to a camera—two weary individuals, probably out in love with each other, but in love with the hope that their own fictionalized would be believed.

I have no knowledge of my mother's life before her miserable marriage to my fa- Joseph and His Style of a father. From what I've gathered from relatives, her life was happy, except for the periods that no one wanted to talk about.

Desk-bare

As it turned out, I really was born on a desk. On a desk in a crowded hospital in Olongapo City where my delivery doctor was a Dee Stepmonsour and where I was marked as an illegitimate birth. It was the only place my mother could give birth in because that was where apparently she was accepted, even nominally, pregnant with the baby of an American navyman.

Good Chinese-Filipino girls in 1970 did not get knocked up by white guys, and I can imagine the hell few options available to her. Her she married a baby inside her and the same instinct that made her survive the early horrors of World War II in Antipas and the decades of my grandfather's tyranny drove her to the only place where she could bring her baby to life.

The people she found there welcomed her because they themselves were survivors, refugees from other lives. Hindu watchmen, bar girls, disreputable bar owners, the pimps and the madames that ran them in 1960s and 1970s Olongapo and Angeles.

But my mother wouldn't stay, because she was desperate. And as you'd learn as your own life's

> I had a childhood that was marked by severe and tragic behavior—abuse

arch extends, people of quality aren't always those with pedigree. The people who answer are those who'd stand by you, help you when no one else would.

So it was in that environment that my mother, Chinese-Filipino to her early 20s, and a servicewoman could craft some romance.

Except that it too was based on a lie. Because as I found out only from my mother's life in 1980, my father was already married. To his child wife, Jean, back in the US. My father was married runs more times after my mother.

I have to believe now that the fiction about a real wedding having taken place must have caused to those hazy days. Days when too damaged persons had a new baby and decided to build something of a life together.

Depression

It's taken me years to learn how to deal with the abuse of my childhood. In 1990, I went into a long depression. I had returned from Los Angeles attempt to be a penniless young writer in Paris—I lived in a garret room in one of the slums in Cité Universitaire for a few months—and upon returning to the US had settled into the old, little house my parents had bought in the middle of an almond orchard in Hanford, California.

It was a mistake to go there. My mother was then in the midst of a terrifying divorce with my father. She had, after years of emotional abuse—strangely he never hit her, at least in my knowledge—finally gotten the courage to give up her wooden mannequin concubine and leave the man who had nearly killed her son.

I spent nearly a year and a half with her, a decent into an emotional hell in which she blamed me for the failure of her marriage and for the failure of her attaining the middle-class security she craved for. The lessons were valid. The cost were too. And times were very, very tough.

The only joy I shared then was my old Australian Shepherd, Bill. She had a relentless nature, but she was ferociously protective of me and I of her. Will go walk in the orchards behind the house, she chasing squirrels, possums, skunks, and I'd sit on wooden bench in the cold, usually too strong much. It was an odd existence for a young man.

Yet I loved the outdoors because there at least, the horror of the interiors I had known growing up did not exist.

The first my birth was broken in because part of who I believed myself to be. And one day, I decided that if I were to finally escape the abuse that had nearly broken me as a child, I needed to be something other than that broken and bruised boy. Instead, I carried the wounds further into my own life, never healing them.

Denial and half truths and lies—truths are often the hallmarks of children of abuse. So it, me, an innate desire to survive that abuse—by any means you can find when you feel as if your very life is being threatened you will look for any means to come out of that madness.

Demons

Children who eventually escape abusive families—if they can escape at all—often also carry a deep desire to rebuild themselves into something from which they came—and for many pieces of abuse, myself included, fiction intertwined with truth enabled in a hodgepodge of success. And imperfect behaviors.

Eventually those demons that battered a child of abuse will haunt her or him as an adult. Years of mind clutter abused children.

Sorting over the past couple of years, because I have established and fallen, because my own life's arch has given me the luxury to finally examine what had gone wrong many years ago, I began to dust finally with my demons.

It is not a shameless exercise. I only turn elements the pursuit of my illegitimate birth. I sense it as a badge because that journey for survival was what drove me as an incomplete adult: who made mistakes along the way.

Confronting abuse is tough. One has to look at what one has endured, and confront it, honestly. Honesty is the only way to deal with abusive families and through this many, I hope to begin putting what had been an objectively undermount trajectory into an altogether more powerful one.

To talk about what I went through as a child, and hopefully in trying to lead a better life, the path to forgiving those who wronged me as child can make me a better adult.

It is extremely important if you were abused that the only way out of that life is through forgiveness. So here is mine—I forgive you dad, you're probably sitting in your lonely house on the Whidbey Pluins outside of Seattle, South Dakota. I forgive you for everything.

My brave 'Isla'

In 2000 I decided to finally go back to the Philippines, a place that had been strangely dear to me, despite the horrors of my childhood. It is here where I first learned a woman who spoke only a little Isla with me. I remain connected to her. She was a woman, a woman who had persevered etc.

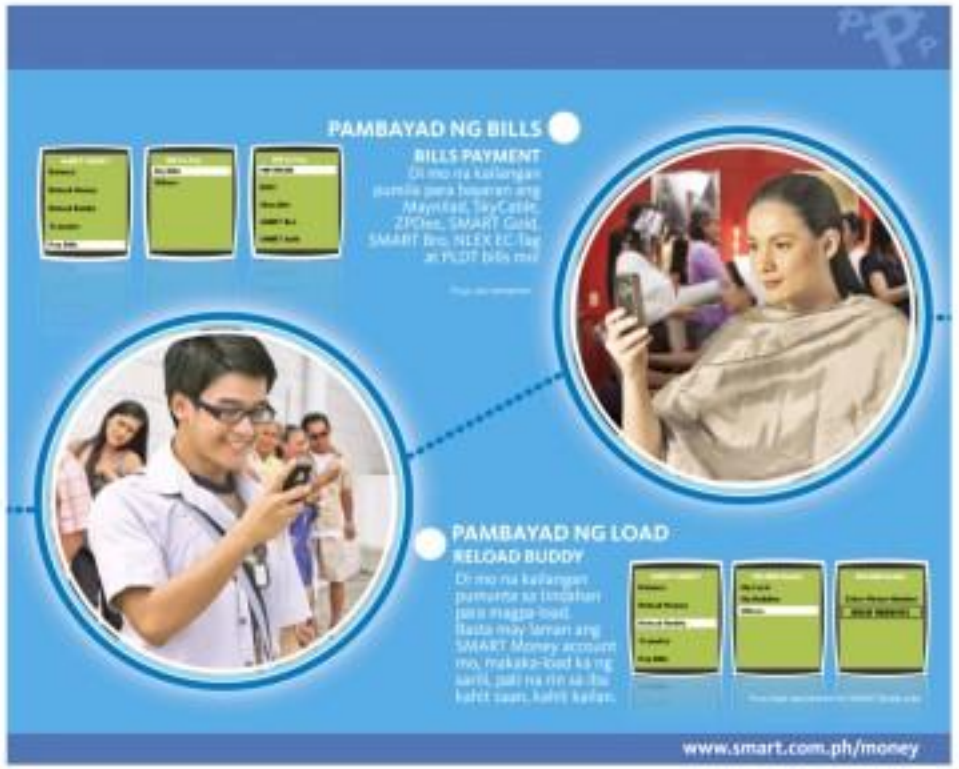
I felt her spirit as a child and again many years later when I returned to Sariaya and visited her grave. I wanted to do right by my Lola Carmen, I still do.

I had asked my lawyer if I needed to do anything to prove my status as a natural born citizen of the Philippines—my parents were married when I was three years old, finally in a roadside wedding chapel in Las Vegas. It was so important to me to have a piece of paper stating I was indeed a legitimate citizen, that I am of this country, that I am of this family.

Forgiveness

Surprisingly, my mother actually did me a good deed about a year after I moved back. She gave me the title to a small piece of property, but reduced and remaining share of my grandfather's coconut farm in Sariaya Island. It's only about 3.4 hectares but part of it is beachfront, where I have caught so-

(BELOW)



Furnishings for small living spaces

WORLD-CLASS furniture and accessories are now available at the Indigo showroom in Legazpi Village.

"We offer a one-stop interior shop for downtown, interior designers and interesting with our broad range of furnishings and accessories...a good number of them modified to suit smaller living spaces," says interior designer Kitchie Nisi, Indigo managing partner.

Indigo's new collection includes dining sets, king-size beds, cushioned sofas, media cabinets, buffet cabinets and tables, dividers, chaise lounges and home furnishings.

LIVING room showcase

SOFA, center table and lamp

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One of Indigo's bestsellers is the versatile four leather storage box which can be used as a **foot stool, a side table or a storage box.** It can be opened up and form into a functional coffee table, while three sleek lamps and throw pillows can **add color and character to the** room.

Indigo uses dign wood, a **lesser known Philippine hardwood** that is as sturdy and yet cheaper than the mahogany.

Indigo carries a wide range of decorative accessories such as **vases, clocks, lamps, throw pillows** and **mats** for home, offices, restaurants or hotels.

An exhibit of three Benguet-based Filipino artist Lowen Ramos is also on display, showcasing photography and graphic design with thematic spots in **Ubuntu Visayan and religious** cues in Cambodia.

Indigo also offers interior design service for offices and lifestyle-oriented establishments. **Among its projects include** the interior design for Gaisano Mall at 6750 Building in Makati, Ice Monster and Hyadru Subic outlets.

Indigo is located at First Metal Building, 309 Gamboa St., Legazpi Village, Makati City, with outlets at the Home Department of Rustan's Shangri-La Towers and Rustan's Makati.

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Lies my mother told me

From page F1

lace in the past. There, a few years ago, I learned to forgive **my mother. I realize now that** she was damaged as well by her own life's trauma. I realized it would be important for me to forgive and to move on.

We have become a family again, and there are no more lies. The lure of lies, abuse and hidden truths has been broken, finally.

Verbal abuse

I continue to learn lessons each day about the abuse I suffered and the abuse I carried as an adult. The worst abuse isn't even physical. The worst abuse comes from the mouth. And anyone you—as I have finally started to do—deal with that abuse once and for all and turn it into something good for someone else, you will continue to abuse. As I did and continue to do.

If anyone who has been in an abusive situation does not confront his demons, he'd find out that the damage he does could be worse. It takes the form of **lies you tell a loved one, the** hubris you possess during a meeting. You will continue to damage yourself until you become the thing you are terrified of becoming the most—the people who abused you.

I have learned from a life that, I pray, others will never have. I feel it's my duty to do something good to ensure that no other little boy has to learn the painful lessons I have.

So, those of you who are lucky enough to be in a happy and secure home, like your family and hug your children. Do not let them because they will remember that forever.

Do something

And those who know of abuse being inflicted—whether against a child, or a wife or a lover or a brother or even just an acquaintance—do something. Stand up, speak for them because they cannot speak for themselves. In time, your own life will become richer and more true.

Writing about one's truths is liberating. It is honest, it is real. I visited my sister and her family last December in their California Mountain bungalow. As I ran the chilly fields with my seven-year-old nephew and my four-year-old niece, I found myself doing an incredible thing—I no longer sat silent in the cold.

My son is leaving the nest soon

By Margie David Collin
Contributor

LUKE Collin

I FELT LIKE THE MICHELIN man, desperate to be relieved of Laura. We already had a name for our child, after Fernando's lone object, for whom he wrote the sweetest sonnets.

Over Christmas lunch, this baby lobbed a mighty punch. The head gasket ejected and, well, I missed Her Majesty's Christmas message.

I'd had a difficult pregnancy. Before going, mind, I was still bargaining with the almighty. Let Laura spring forth fully formed and I would forever be an instrument of His mercy. The infant was perfect, except for mama's a Laura. He was a Luke, and we were smitten.

"And what did you have? A boy or a child?" the mother in one of Douglas Kennedy's books was asked. All his lines are special, boys only room so.

Where did the years go?

Only yesterday, what dramatic gifts I may have had were mine reading Thomas the Tank Engine to Luke.

Oh, the bribes we negotiated to make him eat something besides chicken and chips! Tooth fairies, letters to Santa to make sure he had my correct postcode, nose (noise) when he wore his school uniform for the first time, ears he swooned and devastated, the little shirt he begged me to buy at the supermarket.

The energy of this small dynamo! Like living in the path of a perpetual hurricane!

Within a few months of giving birth, I went back to work. Guilt was the invisible in my voice and the splinter of fear in my heart. We were very lucky with nannies.

Our lives ran on military precision: school runs, London trains, visits to doctors and dentists. How could a small boy—so beautiful and innocent as he was—spend any time at all?

I prepared a 14-page document for the nanny, covering playtime, lunch times, meals, cots and bruises, books to read, games to play, potty training, emergency numbers, treats. None large, nanny Andrea wrote to say how invaluable the notes were; they'd formed templates for her own babies.

My husband and I would come home from work dead-tired, to give Luke his bath, put him in his pajamas. I would rock him to his bed, tell him stories, say our little prayers, the weight of the day dressing away to my little boy closed his eyes, but not before saying "I love you, mommy."

Hours later, he would crawl half-asleep into our waterbed.

We were universal fodder: a family of three, a house amid the orchards, a long garden for locker and son to play football in, holidays in the snow and in the sun.

Every day a labor of love to build up our son's emotional scaffolding, buttress his moral backbone, help him find his place in this big, vibrant strange world.

Tragedy

And then, just like that, we were altered by one tragedy.

Can we ever know the ways of God, discern His purpose? Luke was on a sliding trip where his father died. This once gleeful boy was 13, and I was suddenly all alone in a crushing continent.

How to tell him it was okay to cry, that he didn't have to carry my grief as well? "It's all so meaningless we might as well be extraordinary." Bacon said.

My son put away his toys, where I tucker up from a long, fogged sleep—homesick and heartsick for the past...he had become a serious, thoughtful young man.

How I missed the boy with the small of the sun on his lovely head! His father became an even more palpable presence, because of his precise absence.

Luke coming home from school to an empty house humbled me. He needed continuity, activity, a routine to give structure to his days.

Birthdays behind, one of the countryside's top boarding schools, because his "home" from 13, until he graduated, at 18.

We, in our separate ways, nursed our terrible grief. I to work, he to school, cricket and rugby.

I erased hundreds of name tapes on his clothes, disclosed his cars and progress with his housemaster and confessor, left instructions for Matron.

I lived for half-term and summer holidays, Christmas and easter, when he would come home, like Lawrence remarking from Arabia, the forced call lifted his existence.

Sending a child to a top English public school felt like paying off the debts of a small Russian state. Bowed and bloodied, I survived. I surrendered a child in their care, they gave me back a man.

Minor miracles

Memories moved us, but we could not reclaim the past. The long separations were salved by the vacations in foreign parts that we took together and the letters we wrote to each other; his invariably ending with "Mom, please send me some money."

Whenever we had rows, usually over the non-contemporary equaliser of his room, he would remind me that I should count myself fortunate he wasn't into drugs, in rehab, in trouble, Alhough in those trying times, those are, indeed, minor miracles.

At university, he fell in love for the first time. Charlotte was French and on a year's study leave in the United Kingdom.

Long-distance romances rarely work out and I could see the looming doom round the corner. Getting home from Germany after a summer on the beach with Charlotte, it was to me he cried his broken heart out.

Remembering only too another can make you feel better. Truly I wanted to unring her neck, for this to have. When you want your son's happiness more than your own.

First job

He's finished his first job, in London. Where he finds a flat he can afford to rent in the city, he'll be leaving home again. And that's as it should be. The child leaves the nest to explore, find his place in the world, play a straight and successful bat, find the girl, settle down. Have a navigation tally for his own life, a fresh wind in his sail.

As I ponder the weight of impending solitude, I seem to have always been chronically late for my own life. Perhaps now I can relax a little, love again, greet the brand-new morn with a cheerful heart.

If we have done our job reasonably well, our children are our achievement. When asked what success means to him, the richest man in the world said: "When you get to be my age, you'll be successful if the people you hope would love you do love you. It's something you can't buy. The way to be loved is to be lovable. You always get back more when you give."

My son will come home the next, knowing that the most precious parts of his mother's life are bound up in his, and that he can always come home again.

Plan your wedding like a pro

WITH SO MANY BIG AND SMALL details to attend to, it's helpful to come up with a system to let you enjoy your wedding. Here are tips from Pearl's Nests

Get up a master list. As the Big Day approaches, a bunch of questions are running through your head. Keep the jitters by making a master list of everything (and everyone) that needs to be done on wedding day. Break down the master list on Post-it Notes into smaller chores.

For example, after you have chosen a caterer, write down which dishes you want to be served, how much it will cost, and how many people it will serve. Break the list down from months, to weeks, then finally daily to-dos.

Budget big. Write each item, its cost and the vendor's phone number on a separate note then stick it on a blank page on your wedding binder.

Assign a different color for each category—caterer, photographer, church, and so on. If you later find out a better deal, just add a new note, then cancel regular budget updates on fresh notes.

Write each person's name on a note. Use color codes for each group (blue notes for the groom's family members, pink notes for the bride's family members, green notes for groom's friends, yellow notes for bride's friends, and so on).

Add short descriptions of the guest on the notes. Beigs—likes beer or movies and pasta; Mina—doesn't smoke, watched Pseudomonic Era times.

Switch and reposition guests' names around a dreaming of table seating until you find the best combination.

Here's a no-fuss idea for making place cards.

Take a pad of notes with the adhesive edge facing you and at the bottom. Write a name on the lower half of each note, between the center and the adhesive. Fold the note in half above the name to create a tent card. Fold the top and bottom halves inwards again and tuck one section inside, forming a triangle with a stable base.

JULIA in pink weaver shirt dress and denim low-waste shorts; Lyla in blue jersey shirt and khaki twill shorts; Tasha in white blouse and denim shorts

Celebrating childhood

LIP AND TRISHA THAT'S have Oshkosh has long declared fashion for children.

Exclusively distributed by Cinderella Dreams, Inc., Oshkosh offers a wide selection of casual clothes for kids, be it for schooldays and special affairs or family outings.

Posh little girls will surely love the collection of ruched-lined blouses (with pintucks, sequins and ensign) and shirts (sleeveless with print and shirt dresses), as well as the girlie dresses (long sleeves and skirts).

Blouses are available in fruity candy colors of green, orange, red and pink and also in classic white.

Boys, on the other hand, can choose from an array of vivid (red, blue and orange) jersey shirts with collar and prints (stripes, graphics and slogans), and basic bottoms (pants and shorts) which may be denim, khakis or cargos.

To accessorize, stylish belts and bags are also in store for these young buddies.

With Oshkosh, kids will always be kids, yet they'll never run out of style.

Oshkosh is available at all Cinderella stores and other leading department stores.

LUIS in red jersey shirt with print and denim long shorts; Julia in sparkle blouse with print and denim skirt

TRISHA in red jersey blouse with print and denim shorts; Lyla in jersey shirt with print and denim pants

Midlife as a woman's age of confidence

A woman is most challenged and most fulfilled in her middle years

I THINK ONE IS MOST CONFIDENT IN one's middle years.

Although it can also be the most tedious and trying of years, many women find their most memorable moments as mothers, wives, and career women during that stage.

The Maryknoll College High School Class of 1984 (MCHS84), together with Nivea, has put together a wonderful compilation of heartwarming and inspiring women's stories—taken by women ages 35-45 on their life journeys so far: life, courage and success. The book is aptly titled "Age of Confidence."

The thread that binds these 48 women is they were all, at some point in their lives, a student in Maryknoll. But once used and have been a Maryknollet to fully appreciate the depth of these women's experiences. The reader can easily identify, possibly find parts of herself in the stories written here.

Lawyer Gaby Robles Concepcion in her "Love Divorced" talks about the experience of choosing family over work.

"There comes a point in life when one is painfully called on set priorities, to make agonizing choices. To ignore the call would be to lead several hypocrite existences where one would not make the cut. More than anything, I could not stand the thought one day I would wake up to find out I had missed all the firsts in my children's lives."

Grief

Writer and TV host Denise Symeon recalls her husband's difficult last days in "Love Never Ends":

"I dropped out of the world to take care of my beloved. It was a choice I wholeheartedly made. My load came to think after and I knew he did not want anyone else to care for him. I was always within his reach as he demanded, as he could hold on to me during those long dark nights of intense pain and fear."

When one reaches midlife, one confronts crucial issues, like Marie Beltran, a developmental psychologist and member of MCHS84:

"If ever we are going to become who we truly are, now is the time to do it. It means letting go of many self-definitions we have made for ourselves and breaking free from those that have been handed down to us.

ROOTS AND WINGS
Carby Balao-Gabelle

Midlife passage is an extraordinary time that deepens women of our soul.... Allowing this crucial transition to unfold liberates and empowers life-constricted selves, thus granting confidence and beauty their glimmers."

There are many gems to be picked up from the lives of the 48 women whose stories comprise this book.

Not all her successes as CNN, news presenter Arnie Jurin Besser still considers raising her children her greatest achievement.

Talent manager Lizlie Rodit, in her story "Lessons My Father Taught Me" shares:

"My father's life reminds me like being what it is, will not always give us a smooth road. It is a lesson that keeps me grounded."

Inquirer columnist Isabel Steyegar Asuncion writes in "Full Circle":

"I now understand one can never love to a fault. The beauty of life is it controls and offers its grace in ways that allow us to find ourselves, in its own time and pace, and only because it moves us random with what resonates within us.

Courage and pain

MCHS84 is a class with its own share of loss, courage and pain.

Jinky Dimayuga Brewer lost her 26-year-old son Sam to an accident on Christmas day (he was only 30 years old. Two other classmates, Mingay Evangelist Jacobitz and Dr. Yvette Tuliao Fernandez, both cancer survivors with amazing stories, reach us about the blessings of great faith and love in the face of unconscionable odds.

Early this year, when MCHS84 approached me to edit this book, I was immediately drawn to it.

But as in many projects like it, at some point in the road, I almost wanted to throw in the towel. But things worked out, and with everyone pulling together, the book was completed in record time.

Kindergarten pal

This is one truly amazing group of women. Toward the end of the project, when the final draft was sent to me together with the dedication page, I was dumbfounded and close to tears with my discovery. There, on the dedication page was the name of a classmate who had passed so early in life: Monta Fuentila De la Alas.

Lala...to I knew her, was my best friend in kindergarten when I first entered Maryknoll. However, after a year, she fell and's study ill with a kidney ailment and was held back by two years. She eventually returned to school and became a part of what is now MCHS84.

Sadly, she passed on at the age of 9. I can still remember to this day how the announcement of her death over the school PA system drove me to tears. I knew she had been sick but her death came as a shock.

My parents did not allow me to attend her wake because they felt it would be best for me to remember her alive.

Life has a way of working things out and closure can come many decades later. I am thankful that through this book I was able to remember and say a proper goodbye to a friend who was a big part of my childhood.

E-mail reviewer@gmail.com.
E-mail the author at carbybalao@gmail.com

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Tea time

DESIGN YOUR OWN TEA bags filled with your favorite flavored teas. Tea has become a common gift, and others we find that customize and containers filled with dried tea leaves are left neglected and forgotten. Here is a fun way to enjoy tea, especially if your household is not equipped with the traditional tea strainers and other tea-related paraphernalia.

Making your own pretty tea bags will not only impress your guests, but will also complement your "tea time" table settings.

STRETCH your creativity and make your own variations on the other end of the string. Cut paper strips and write on them or draw patterns on them. You can own personalize them by writing your guests' names. After cutting the fabric to desired shape and tie string to the desired length, knit them together in a pot to entribe.

THERE are several ways to assemble your little pretty tea bags. First, find fabric that are light and sheer slightly perforated—organza and chiffons are best. Since they come in many colors and patterns, you can easily match them with your table setting. The simplest way is to cut the fabric into a round disc, fill the center with a tablespoon of dried tea leaves, gather the sides to form a little pouch. Tie with a string to secure and, voila! Your very own tea bag. If you're talented enough and have the time you can be more creative by cutting the fabric into different shapes and sizes, sewing them, leaving a small cavity to let the tea leaves in. Fill them in and finish off. The string can be sewn on or tied on as you like.

WHEN dried, you may continue filling with tea leaves.

Cultivating a fragrant herb garden

By Sweejeen S. Murillo
Contributor

THERE ARE SOME HERBS that are both culinary and medicinal. Finally those herbs are fragrant enough to sweeten the rain water your nerves or make you feel relaxed.

Wellness with herbs

Should you want fresh herbs not only as health food but for aromatherapy as well, cultivate your own herbal garden. It can be right in your backyard or if you live in apartment, condominium or townhouse, you can grow them by your windows or by the porch. The idea is to make sure to enjoy not only in taking care of plants but most of all in seeing, grow and inhaling all the time the fresh oxygen that our body needs as you make rounds of your chores early in the morning before eating breakfast or in the afternoon as soon as you come home from office or work.

Another advantage is that you can be sure that your herbs are really fresh and organically grown unlike those sold in markets. It is recommended that you cut a few sprigs of fresh herbs with your breakfast daily. You can also make tea out of your herbs. Green teas are proven to be antioxidant rated especially if you take herb tea or juice daily.

Some of the common herbs now cultivated in our country are the French Tarragon, Rosemary, Lavender, Sweet basil, Mint, Oregano, Tangkui and Habanero, among others.

Herbs can be easily grown by top cuttings. As pesting medium, use a mixture of one part garden soil, one part river sand, one part vermicelite dust and one part rice hull or ipa. This organic composition is fertile and porous. As to containers, you can use plastic pots, clay or cement pots. There are also containers made out of black bags which are quite cheaper and they come in different sizes. The best time to propagate is late afternoon or very early morning before the sun is up. With the use of top cuttings, about 10 days before long, immediately plant them individually in small plastic bags and place them in a shady but well lighted location, airy and humid. When there at least twice a day - early morning and afternoon mists.

After about two months, when already rooted, transfer them to partial sun location. If you want to organically-grown plant, avoid applying chemical fertilizers. You may use compost from rotted leaves, animal manure or fertilizer tea. To make the organic fertilizer tea, just place all rotted but fully dried waste in a pail with rain/tap water. After two days, the water becomes brown looking like a tea. It is the strained water that can be applied on the plant's roots.

HERBS can ease your nerves or make you feel relaxed.

Showcase of luxurious European appliances

DO YOU REMEMBER THAT EXhilarating feeling of opening a gift and getting exactly what you wanted? That's the kind of feeling that the designers at Electrolux seek to evoke in everyone who chooses or uses one of their products. Intensifying its corporate philosophy of "thinking of you" Electrolux brings together its most innovative and ground breaking products in an exhibition appropriately tagged Electrolux Gallery: A Thoughtful Space.

This exhibition is aimed at showcasing real examples of home appliances that are more than the usual, an statement to European luxury. It is a glimpse into the company's design philosophy and how customers inspire their need to re-assess.

More than just a company that makes products for the sake of demand, Electrolux presents consumers with inspiring and futuristic home appliances. Brandishing its heritage with over 100 years of global experience in the industry, the company has continuous to create appliances for safe use, for the environment and future generations.

From the thoughtful gallery, one such product ahead of its game is the ultra silent Ergorapido.

One of the world's quietest vacuum cleaners designed with a filtration system to prevent the re-distribution of dust particles while vacuuming.

Another product from this premier European brand is the newest fridge, the newest contemporary hub of the home that features the freezer, TV, audio and advanced organizing and messaging tools. It's also an advanced fridge and freezer system with family-sized capacity, frost-free freezer technology and great features such as quick chill for cooling drinks in no time.

Recently launched in the world's most beautiful cook top. The Ascera cook top combines the very best of technology with great design.

For more information about Electrolux's lifestyle and environmentally friendly appliances, call its customer care crack line at 873-6100 or do-it-yourself-line number 1-800-1-800-6900.

ELECTROLUX Ultra Silencer

3 designers for Italian kitchenware

ITALIAN BRAND ALESSI introduced its newest sculptural, experimental and innovative products in small-scale and limited productions from its line Officina Alessi. Three renowned designers who have contributed their creative genius to the Italian brand are Frank Gehry, Enrico Hider and ISAYAA.

Gehry, a Pritzker Prize-winning architect based in Los Angeles, California, is most recognized for his designs of the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, Metatron Art Museum in Wilmington and Dancing House in Prague, to name a few. His works are so popular many of his architectural masterpieces and private residences have become tourist attractions. A collaborating designer for Alessi, Gehry's elevating designs of home and kitchenware have held their place with the Italian brand. One such item that's a must-mention is the Fito Kettle, an eye-catching unconventional form drawn from Gehry's inspirations of the sea. The Fito Kettle is said to remind one of two fish jumping over a wave. The interplay of mahogany handles [two jumping fish] and stainless-steel body [wave] also produces a musically pleasing whistle sound.

Another prominent designer is Hider, a Hungarian architect who gave by the philosophy of organic architecture, bringing harmony between human designs and the natural world. Hider is considered one of the most contemporary architects of our times. One notable item that lives up to his design ideal is the Tulip Espresso and Coffee Cups. Translating the beauty of flowers into cups, Hider does away with painted tea-coffee sets, instead creating a masterpiece, imitating with meticulous detail the shapely form of tulips (see photo).

The third designer, ISAYAA, is one to new best seen designers from Tokyo, namely Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, the established partnership. Kazuyo and Ryue have been coordinating work in international urban planning, landscape and interior design, exhibition installations and industrial design. The duo's latest works include the Christian Dior Omotesando shop in Tokyo, Contemporary Art Museum in Kanazawa, the municipal theater in Almere, Holland, Glass Centre at the Art Museum in Toledo and the extension to the Institute of Modern Art in Valencia, Spain. Their newest addition to the Officina Alessi collection is the Fruit Basket, a beautiful tea set composed of a large container, sugar bowl, kitchen boxes and round tray all in mirror-polished stainless steel. The idea for this design was to

FILET Basket tea set collection by Officina Alessi

Insurance firm refurbishes hospital playroom

MANULIFE DAVAO EMPLOYEES RENOVATED the Migi's Corner playroom at the Davao Medical Center.

Volunteers from Manulife swapped in DMC to help kick-start the renovated area, with donated books, toys and furniture. Young patients with various illnesses eagerly witnessed the transformation of the area into a refurbished playroom.

Manulife's officers and agents joined in the blessing and reopening of Migi's Corner, along with DMC-Kythe Foundation and officials of the Davao Medical Center.

Migi's Corner is a foundation dedicated to enhancing medical facilities of children confined in government hospitals. Manulife Philippines has supported Migi's Corner and Ward projects since 2000, with the playroom at the Davao Medical Center as one of the early beneficiaries.

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Visit www.manulife.com.

KIDS check out the new toys at Migi's corner.

MANULIFE Agency director for Mindanao Cesar Pagcaliwan (right) helps kids

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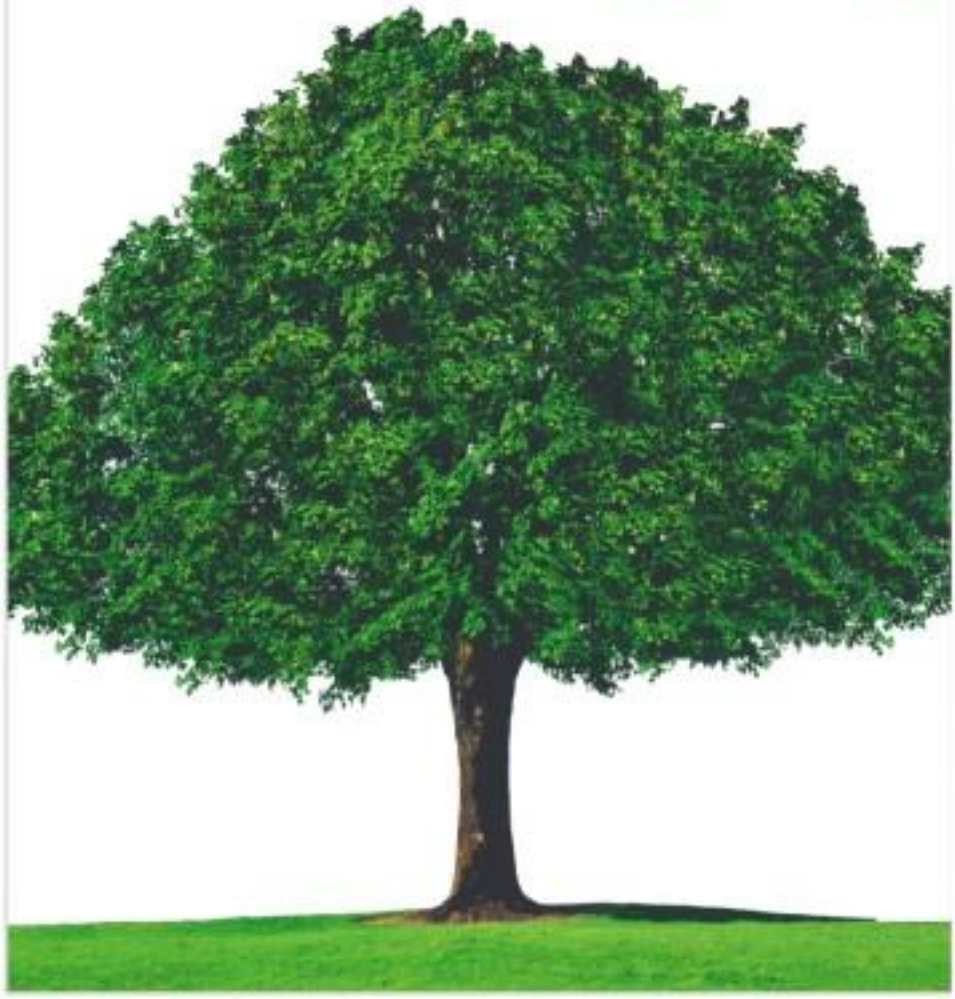

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BIGFOOT'S Lita Albis and Patrik Puno with Carla Bermeo and Jude Bacalso

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BG PAALAM. Tyrone Mendonca, Margot Osmeña, Rowland Sala and Philip Rodrigues, president of the Fashion Council of Cebu

Bigger, grander bridal fair

For two full days, brides-to-be and everyone else came to see what Cebu's top wedding planners had to offer

FASHION Council of Cebu designers Amy Esparis, Dina Rodrigues and Felie Yu

OPENING. Jen Imbuido wore SM Hans Mauri, Margot Osmeña and Jun Abad.

ALBERT Arriba and his model Christine de Gracia

THE BRIDAL FAIR "PRESIDENCE" AT THE Marco Polo Plaza Cebu went on its second year and scored a bigger success than last year's event. For two full days, brides-to-be and their fiancés as well as the general public came to see what Cebu's top wedding planners had to offer. All in there: stationeries pastry shops, florists, photographers and more.

Big floor's fragrances handled guest during and matchmaking games, while the Cebu City Civil Registrar's office conducted seminars on marriage licensing and family planning.

Maggie Cabrera of Joyful Weddings gave a talk on wedding planning. Barbi Chan of Marbellino New York shared makeup tips for brides and for anyone who cared to listen. Swarovski's Bronze Qualentino gave the Radisson Concord of Cebu a rack of crystals, an embellish bridal finery as the culminating fashion parade.

But that's going ahead of the story. First, there was a grand morning opening ceremony that had the city's glamorous First Lady, Margot Osmeña, cutting the ribbon with hotel general manager Hans Mauri, Radisson Council of Cebu president Philip Rodrigues and Silverchalk's Joel Abad. She is married to SP and head of Silverchalk for the Visayas and Mindanao, with Silverchalk's Forever Visa card being the event's main sponsor.

Jaime Piccorelli

Free admission

It was free admission to the exhibitions fashion show held at the lobby of the hotel, which was filled with white-draped chairs, a profusion of flowers and a ramp generously sprinkled with Swarovsky crystals.

Upbeat as Hans and his Heart with their twin sons Austin and Morgan, Margot Osmeña with Teresita Almalbis and Rowland Sala, Bernice Quimbo with Anna Hoorenman of Swarovsky Singapore and the eight designers of the Fashion Council of Cebu: Philip Rodrigues, Albert Arriba, Amy Esparis, Jun Navarro, Felie Yu, Dina Rodrigues, Oj Melo and Cary Santiago.

Vince Rosario, with his usual panache, announced the fashion show, which featured the loveliest of the Models Association of Cebu. Indeed, those gowns sparkled with Swarovski crystals in muted colors.

An after-the-show reception was held at the Lobby Lounge, and it was the perfect occasion to congratulate everyone responsible for the success of it all: director of sales and marketing Lynn Bersoto, events coordinator Cielo Bermeno, Rhenna Garcia-Logarta of a PR girl's, HRD head Julie Nonjon, assistant reservations manager Jude Pangan, and Marietta Miñanita, who at last spoke exciting manager par: a fabulous spread on the buffet.

Enchanted evening

Soon after, there was another enchanted evening at the Miami Felix Plaza Cebu Hotel with a preview of Mia. That's the new al fresco grill and bar on the penthouse floor (24th story) where the evening breezes are cool at 1,000 feet above sea level.

Johnny Litton was the evening's program host, brassily and wittily as ever. He pointed out that Mia has a theater kitchen, which means you can see how your food is cooked through a large pane of glass.

In attendance were Silverchalk Group chairman George S.K. Ty, and the mayor of Sesaling (Cebu) Ang Dongkan, here on a private visit. They exchanged pleasantries with Cebu City Mayor Rosario Osmeña.

Others in attendance were Marco Polo Plaza Hotel's VP for sales and marketing Homer Pearson and his wife Ruth, the hotel's chairman Alfred Ty, president Ivy Sibal, and GM Oscar Kraal, who said Mia will be open to the public some days in June.

LUIS Dizon and Dr. Greg Alvior

GERRY Contreras "roasts" Dr. Donny David.

Birthday bash

LEADING PLASTIC SURGEON DONNY DAVID celebrated his birthday with a simple dinner in his Makati house. Around to greet him were close friends—architect Corey Contreras, Dr. Greg Alvior, jazz artist Cris Morales, businessman Jobcar Valdez, banker Ana Avila Gramlich, former Bureau of Investment Eli Cardenas, Ado Escudero.

CELEBRATOR Surrounded by Corey Contreras and Cris Morales

LIVING ROOM

Haven for homemakers

HOME WORKS IS A HOME CENTER that highlights a complete and expanded collection of home products and accessories, owner to a contemporary store setting that is evolved toward the Filipino home and expectations.

Located inside Ever Gotesco Malls in Commonwealth, Ortigas Extension, Grand Canyon Caloocan, and Lipa, Batangas, Home Works is a one-stop shop which features home office furniture and accessories, hardware, appliances, stationery, DIY and imported items.

"We provide solutions for your furniture and hardware needs," said Karen Lopez, operations head of Home Works.

"We want to help homemakers make their living spaces look classy even with a limited budget."

A complete set of living room, dining room, bedroom, bath and garden furniture are displayed in Home Works stores.

It also offers a complete line of home products and accessories from appliances (audio and video equipment, washing machines, small appliances), hardware (tools and accessories), electrical, home décor, housewares and home care.

Soon, the different branches will also unveil Showcase Areas that will present the array of products that Home Works can let its customers purchase.

The showcases will be thematic based on the living spaces of the home, including Bedrooms, Living Rooms, Dining Rooms, Balconies and Bathrooms for alfresco and places.

Home Works Home Centers can be found at Ever Mall Commonwealth (tel. 9522157); Ever Mall Ortigas (tel. 4629191, Ever Grand Central Mall (tel. 1377141; and in Lipa City, Batangas (tel. 7564491).

DINING ROOM

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Information given is a general overview of the project. The developer reserves the right to modify this project without prior notice.

BESIDE the Chinese Wedding cabinet is a state-of-the-art Sub-Zero refrigerator combination.

INTERPRET the classic kitchen in a new way.

A SEPARATE kitchen shows how a mix of traditional and modern design can create a unique look.

BEAUMARIS color composition submerges the entire room in a cozy atmosphere.

Presenting the living kitchen

Text by Ramona C. Burgos
Photos by Rudy Esparza

THE KITCHEN HAS evolved into more than just a room of undistinguished storage cabinets and cooking utensils. It has become a place where people gather to eat, drink and be merry.

According to a recent study on home shoppers' preferences commissioned by Moeller International, a distributor (American manufacturer of kitchen cabinets), 13 percent of a person's time in the home is spent in the kitchen. Designers are catching on to this trend by styling kitchens to become a focal point of the home.

"The kitchen is more than a cooking place; it's now a living space integrated with one's daily activities. This is why BeauxArts presents the BeauxArts collection, which combines many styles that conform to one's personality or preference," says architect Jessie Jose, project manager.

The BeauxArts Collection was first presented in 2006 to the United States and is now introduced in the Philippines. The collection was created in collaboration with Siobhan's Design design partner Mick De Giulio.

"With BeauxArts, we are changing the rules. We are bringing together design elements and stylistic directions that have never before been combined. A concept that at first glance is unusual, or unusual pieces, however, is fascinating," says Volker Benoh, managing director, Stiftbille Pte Ltd.

BeauxArts combines styles from various cultures and countries, Benoh says. Inspirations were taken from the environment of the Roman Empire and Italian Renaissance as well as architecture of the ancient Greece.

Suggestions of the French and Italian Baroque can be found, as well as elements of the late Gothic and Rococo.

One of the most luxurious examples for structures in the BeauxArts style is the Statue of Liberty given to the American people by the people of France in celebration of their freedom.

VOLKER Benoh

Creative planning

Warm, natural wood or matte-painted surfaces? With BeauxArts, deciding on one does not necessarily mean giving up on the other. Instead, planning is done in segments.

For example, from a design perspective, the cooking area is separated from the sink or preparation area. In each segment, fronts and countertops with different materials, finishes, and material dimensions can be used.

It's now a focal point of the home

"The design mix incorporates the entire room. With BeauxArts, therefore, we no longer talk about new items but rather about a composition of details," Jose says.

Elegant kitchen furniture combined with rustic nostalgic antiques and heirloom items placed between stainless-steel fronts—all that is possible with BeauxArts.

Also characteristic of the BeauxArts kitchen interior design is symmetry. According to the idea, a large and dominant piece occupies a central position, while a balanced design is created around it.

For example, extra-large tea dolmain style ovens are flanked on both sides by base cabinets with drawers.

The main symmetrical distribution of space is also recommended in the dining area. Refrigerators in stainless steel and display cabinets featuring classy lines, with plenty of drawers and glass doors, stand detached in the room or are placed next to one another.

Color concepts

BeauxArts presents a color selection of white, beige, green, and grey tones, as well as new wood finishes.

Warm matte tones of light brown, light green, light yellow and light blue are complemented by earthy colors and brown tones as well as natural green and ochre hues.

An unconventional kitchen planning, light, as a rule, are positioned over countertops or islands on the fronts of wall cabinets.

In BeauxArts, the lighting serves more than just a functional purpose. It is much more indirect and understated. Even wall cabinets and niches set from the ceiling, the light is distributed over work areas and the entire space.

The effect is a sense of comfortable and luxurious atmosphere. At the same time, the kitchen appears to be larger, while the indirect light sources ensure perfect illumination for cooking.

Another innovation for use in the kitchen is the use of living room-like sconces for lighting. They enhance the overall symmetrical balance, and makes the kitchen truly one with the rest of the house.

Where in the world is Windang?

Text by Angelina G. Galang
Contributor
Photos by Gisele Galang

IT'S NOT IN THE mind or state of mind, or in burnout, bewildered, or not 'attended', such as when one's world is spinning before-shelter.

Windang is a place—in New South Wales, Australia, about two hours south of Sydney by car. It's in the South Coast, a region of pristine beaches, unspoiled forests and charming countryside.

I "discovered" it while browsing a brochure map during my home visit with my daughter Gisele. I was mentally ticking the South Coast, my destination on our east coast trip with Dipsy Abrenosia, a confirmed "number five spoken towns," who'll go to great lengths (disavowed to show visiting friends around.

"Windang," in small letters, jumped out of the glossy page. "We have to go there!" I exclaimed, curious to know if there was anything about the place or its name that bore any similarity with the meaning of the Pinoy slang word. Regardless of what we might find there, it would be a blast telling friends I'd been to Windang!

It's just an aboriginal name, said my daughter, talking me out of it. She'd heard about the place as a consequence of her having entered "windang" while describing an extraordinarily crazy week-week to a Filipino colleague whose urban Pinoy vocabulary obviously hasn't been updated since he left Manila.

Dipsy, a longtime Sydneysider, was unaware of the Australian place or the Pinoy adjective.

STUNNING sandstone structure in the Barrenjoey Lighthouse

Residential area

A little research revealed that Windang is located on a 2.29-square kilometer strip of land between a lake and a sea that flows out to the Pacific Ocean. It is primarily a residential area with a population of less than 2,500.

We didn't note Windang, we just drove through it, as its main road is a segment of the network connecting the coastal cities and towns. We were in and out in a matter of minutes, my camera missing the "Welcome to Windang" billboard.

But the trip wasn't. But I not even always marked on the map keeps the doors of an eccentrically preoccupied on the road, so we came up with solid, interesting place names we've encountered. Culturally many began with W.

There's Wardhaven, an inner-city suburb of Sydney near Kings Cross, the red-light district. Just outside the city there's Warriewood, where Giselle and her friends had gone 'bushwalking' and were ambushed a few months ago. In 1998, I and three newspaper colleagues passed by Wollombi, a town resembling a Western movie set, en route to a wine-tasting tour in the Hunter Valley.

As Dipsy, Giselle, and I made our way through the South Coast, road signs yielded more W names: Woonona, Wollongong, Warrawong, Warilla. More were on the map we consulted every now and then: Bilongarilla, Wamberal, West Beach.

By noon we were in Wollongong, a major South Coast city, better known to Filipinos as home to Fil-Aussie comedian writer Mo'Sesta Bolita, who earned her PhD at the University of Wollongong and is now a lecturer there.

WHERE'S W

A CALM Kiama blowhole

DIPSY Abrenosia takes in the sweeping view from the Sea Cliff bridge.

ZEN Oasis front window reflects its restored setting

TEAHOUSE-BOOKSHOP in Wollongong, Southern Highlands

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Information given is a general overview of the project. The developer reserves the right to modify the project without prior notice.

Where in the world . . .

From page F13

Wagga Wagga sort of has a sentimental value for being one of Giselle's earliest project sites (her work as an environmental scientist takes her to different places). When she first told me three years ago that she was driving down to Wagga Wagga, I thought the name was a term of endearment for the place, if not a joke. For me, to say mate, my sisters and I had a nickname for flared and palazzo pants: wagwags, apparently derived from tradesmen.

To set the record straight and don't say further driving from me, Giselle e-mailed a photo of Wagga Wagga airport. Later during another visit, I'd caught a performance of an "Australian Idol" contestant from Wagga Wagga. A fellow-mass friend explained that wagga is the aboriginal word for crow and, therefore, the drive-by monikers means that the place has a big population of the black bird.

"HOMING" snapshot of Windang, just past the welcome billboard

SUNSET glow on Long Reef Beach Bicentennial Walk

BROOMS in Berrima shop are too pretty to be put to work.

up's daughters had law wedding two years ago, and Berry, a country town with charming antiques, arts and crafts shops blending well with trendy cafés.

In Kiama, we lined up alongside other tourists around the harbor fencing off the town's main tourist attraction, the blowhole. It's a one rare fenced area the years by the crashing of the waves on the cliff and which spews water like a geyser when the seas are rough.

Giselle and I had our own reason assisted on the blowhole, hoping for at least one big splash, but all we got were a few puny spits. I might have wished some more, had Dipsy not warned that, given that it had been six hours since our last wee, something else was about to blow — her bladder.

Finally, like a cherry on top of a sundae, Berry was Dipsy's prize after a long day of driving. In one of the shops, this boss of her own advertising graphic design agency found a new addiction in her sleek car.

WHERE TO

FALL in the Southern Highlands

Scene of a fight

Windang means "scene of a fight," according to the library website of Wollongong which, in turn, means "sound of the sea."

Sea-ful names were no less intriguing: Gunnadoo, Ulladulla, Jamberoo, Cleveland, Minnamurra and Coolangatta (sounds like a recipe for baked cooking).

Like cookies at the end of a movie, these names called up as we moved on, accompanied with typical English ones like Scarborough, Stanwell Park, Bony Meadow, Campbelltown, Clifton, Alma Vale. One sign pointed to Blackbutt Forest. You could say, that got us... to, grinding.

"Today's drive was brought to you by the letter W and by the number 3," chuckled Giselle, a proud "Seaton Sevor" alumna, on our way back to the city.

Our South Coast drive took us to four more stops: Bancroft Park, where cliffs and art galleries were a feast for the eyes; the cliff pledge along the Grand Pacific Drive linking Sydney to the Southern Highlands and the South Coast; Kiama, the town where one of Syd-

BOATS get upper-deck parking in South Coast town of Berry.

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Where in the world is Windang?

From page D14

CLOUDS relish waves in the South Coast beach.

KOOKABURRA on Smugglers' Trail, Palm Beach

AUTUMN leaves

STONE stairway leaves on Smugglers' Trail leading to Barrenjoey Lighthouse in Palm Beach

SHOPPING "arcade," Kiama-style, winding away as charming as the waves

surfcoast readers black-and-white-framed décor.

Two weeks earlier, as our joint birthday celebration (we each turn a day apart) Glynn took us to her other favourite quaint town, Berrima, in the Southern Highlands. It is filled historic, having been established during the era of expansion of New South Wales, and it looks like a preserved colonial village, complete with a courthouse, correctional center and jail. Here you'll also find fine art galleries, as well as eateries, "gourmet" pubs, inns, and lollies (candies), and exquisite alpaca clothing boutiques.

The surprise of the day was a highly recommended vegetarian restaurant off the main highway, a big log-cabin structure in the middle of nowhere, aptly named Eco Oasis.

On the return drive, we stopped in Bowral to cool down in the lookout where Glynn took her sister, Metro-editor Joyce Dipasupil, and their brother Oscar, two years ago. We must have scattered into the wrong clearing in the bush because we ended up on a cliff edge without any barrier. I was tempted to proclaim the "lookout" sign, updating the word and adding an exclamation point, to caution other bushwalkers.

In between our two weekend sojourns, Giselle and I braved the Northern Beaches, a region of nearly 20 beaches located north of Sydney CBD. I wanted to see Long Reef Beach, where Giselle shot the photo for the cover of my mother's collection of articles.

Why we start from the top, suggested a friend of hers. So we drove to the northernmost suburb, Palm Beach, an hour from the city. The scenery alone was worth the trip, but the real adventure was the 45-minute hike up a narrow stone stairway leading to the Barrenjoey Lighthouse 131 meters above sea level.

The beaches are accessible by bus. The closest to Giselle's North Sydney neighborhood on Balmoral, where we copied two weddings one Saturday afternoon, and the more popular Manly, where she'll taken me tuesday parasailing two years ago.

"Go see of waves," Queens DM Brandon Hallmark had suggested when I purchased my ticket in early March. Yes, that's the plan, I'd told her, hopefully since this one going to be my birthday holiday she (incidentally, also March-born) generally succeed this particular trip to be rabbit any of my previous ones.

On my return I happily reported that it was as she had wished. But I couldn't resist teasing her: Have you ever been in Windang?

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Know more about the country in tour festivals

TRAVEL BRIEFS

WITNESS GRAND FESTIVALS AROUND THE country through Dagenda Travel Philippines' promo:

On June 27 to 29, participate in Pintados in Tacloban, Leyte. Places to visit are Sto. Niño Shrine, San Juanico Bridge and Mt. Arthur Landing site.

On Aug. 15 to 17, celebrate with Dayanghan in Kalibo.

On Sept. 19 to 21, join Black Nazarene Feast in Quiapo.

On Sept. 19 to 21, join Sinulog in the Visayas.

On Sept. 19 to 21, join Ilocandia in the Ilocos Region.

On Sept. 19 to 21, join Kadayawan in Davao.

On Oct. 17 to 19, join the Masskara Festival in Bacolod City or the Lanzones Festival in Camiguin Island on the same dates.

Dagenda Travel's grand festival promo provides free fare for one native you book and buy three seats. Included in the promo are round-trip airfares on PAL/Cebu Pacific/Air Phils., two-night hotel accommodations, daily breakfast, guided city and countryside tour, and festival highlight activities. Call 8810365/ 8817349/ 8921-8786 loc.

Special events venue

Alfresco di Firenze—Baguio City's newest pride in premiere hotel accommodations—unlocks two exciting function venues that will suit various events requirements. With a maximum seating capacity of 300, the hall is also perfect for conventions, exhibits, video screenings, and special celebrations like weddings, birthdays and anniversaries.

Its Piazza function venue is the best location for smaller yet equally special festivities or private gatherings.

Alfresco di Firenze is at No. 1, Military Drive, Brgy. Lualhati, Baguio City. Call Rachel Salcedo at 0919-4213688 or telefax (63-74) 4242525.

Next stop: Singapore

The best way to see Singapore is to get The Singapore Tourist Pass (STP). The STP grants just S$60 (₱1,620+) per day and comes with the option of a 1-day, 2-day or 3-day pass.

Tourists can have an unlimited number of rides on buses and trains while exploring this dynamic and fun city. Call 63 63668 or e-mail stpinfo@spunlic.net.ph.

IRRESISTIBLE BAGUIO

Baguio City's The Manor at Camp John Hay brings back its irresistible Baguio promo. From June 15 to Sept. 30, enjoy 50 percent off regular room rates for a minimum of two nights' stay. Call Baguio (074) 4244911 to 43, 42-4100-32; Baguio hotline (02) 8408813, 8408111; Manila sales office: 6221-449-4719/8409523; or e-mail sales@jhhotels.com.

PROMOTING THE PHILIPPINES

The National Association of Independent Travel Agencies (NAITAS) and ABS-CBN Broadcasting Network held recently their 1st Trade Kapatiran, Pagod Mo" event at the Lopez Tower, ABS-CBN compound. It was a great success, attended by employees, TV stars and guests. Photo shows ABS-CBN president Charo Santos-Concio, seated on far (from left) NAITAS chair Angel Nuñez Bagtas, Consul Sisters Lim Joseph of Republic of Lamia, and ABS-CBN's Gong Osorio cutting the ceremonial ribbon. The event showcased tour packages, domestic tourism destinations and regional products which were offered at special discounted rates.

Online booking to Puerto Princesa

A growing number of tourists visiting Puerto Princesa are for long or less expensive and time-saving online reservations to plan their travel, according to Francis Patrick Kendall, vice president of Legend Hotels International Corporation.

The Legend Palawan has integrated its online booking system with a 24/7 customer care center to assist travelers or all their needs.

Island Cove attractions

Island Cove Hotel and Leisure Park is located in the historic town of Kawit, Cavite. Accessible in just 45 minutes from Roxas Boulevard and Coastal Road, the 12-hectare Mediterranean-inspired island sanctuary boasts of over 150 hotel rooms and cottages, dining outlets, sports and recreation facilities as well as banquet and function rooms.

Island Cove's other attractions are Dolores Water Park, Fishing Village, Kawit Land, Island Spa, Island Bongo & Pic Sports Dive, By the Bay and Fisherman's Deck.

Premium weekend escapade

Shore Hotel at Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, offers the ultimate weekend escapade for the whole family for as low as ₱5,299.

Kids will enjoy the exciting games at Shore's Kiddie Playroom, while couples can take a dip in either of the hotel's two pools.

Availing of this Weekend Escapade package until June 30 also gives guests a special package rate when they book an overnight stay at Avani Ayala in Ayala, Batangas. E-mail info@shoreclubs.com or call 7777777 local 7100.

Malaysia Airlines offers zero fares

For the first time in its 60-year history, Malaysia Airlines is offering the Everyday Low Fares campaign, which covers all its basic destinations and selected routes between Malaysia and China. One million seats will be offered to customers to book air travel within the region.

Bookings are open May 21 to June 3 for travel between July 1 to Dec. 14. To enjoy these low fares, travelers must make their flight reservations at www.malaysiaairlines.com.

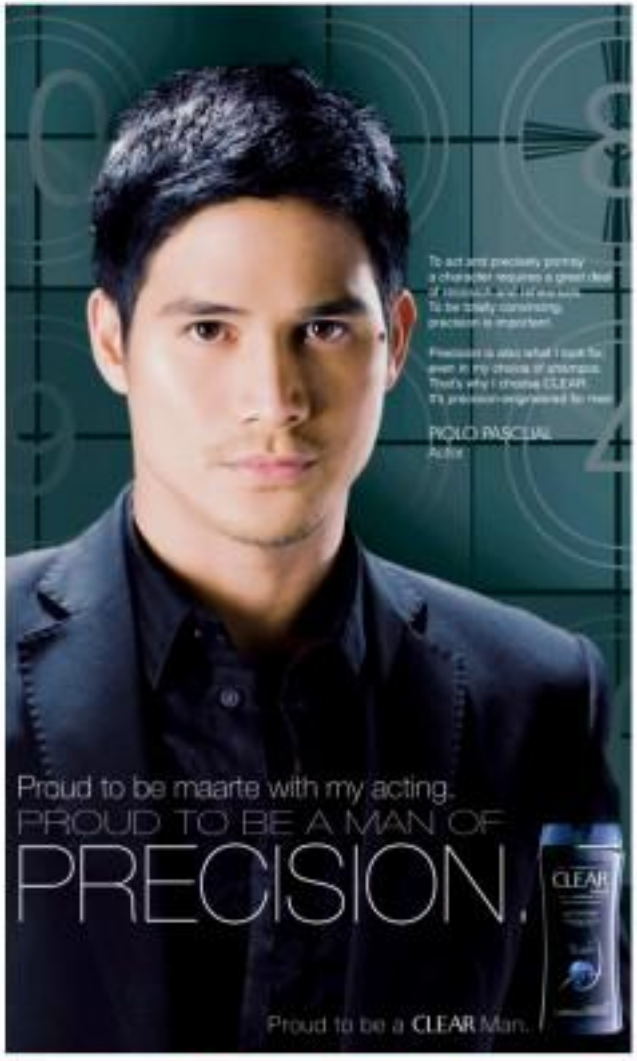
ZOOBIC SAFARI

Zoobic Safari is one attraction you will find at Subic Bay Freeport's Formia Adventure. Embracing a fifteen-hectare land, local and foreign guests can expect an astonishing sight of diverse exotic animals roaming and frolicking in their natural habitat. Close encounter is an exciting zone encounter (3 ft. away) with Siberian and Bengal Tigers and recently Snowy the White Tiger. A crocodile farm is also part of its attraction.

Sunday LIFESTYLE Weddings

I live the life of my character - I am precision engineered

"It's so important that I study the character I'm portraying. I talk to people, research, and even go to places where my character is supposed to be. Most of the time, I get so intense that I actually get stressed to try this already. I can't do anything less than that - even if it requires me to live in the mountains for a week."



How to plan your wedding from abroad

You want to get married in your old hometown but you're overseas? As always, planning is everything

By Maricielle Ligon
Contributor

YOUR FIANCÉ HAS proposed and both of you have set the wedding date, but you have one problem: You are both working abroad and want to get married in your hometown back in the Philippines.

You don't even have to lean on him to get started. What to do, when to start? Just thinking about it can be overwhelming and even disturbing.

Let me share with you some of my executive experiences with my clients who are based abroad. My long-distance love affair with a couple always begins with e-mail. It's usually a frantic bride inquiring about my services.

First thing I ask is how they got my number. More often than not, they saw our company's name listed in a Philippine wedding magazine and saw some featured weddings that we had planned and organized.

Planning your Philippine wedding when you are far away is all based on trust, trust and trust. Your wedding planner, if you do decide to get help from the other end, has to be credible, reliable and experienced. One who won't buckle under pressure.

Here are some tips for you before you make that call to your wedding planner:

1. Ask your family or relatives to mail you some local wedding magazines so you get an idea of the local trends and accredited suppliers that are really in the business.

2. Before you can get carried away with all the beautiful bridal magazines that they want sending, please check the necessary legal documentation needed by the church of your choice. This becomes twice as crucial if your fiancé is a foreigner. Documentation is also very important if you are having a Roman Catholic wedding. You will really have to make time for this as some documents may not be with you. A relative in the Philippines can be assigned to set these aside for you.

3. When choosing your suppliers and especially your wedding planner, make sure you feel comfortable with them and they can comment on your own ideas without getting wasted (It's still your wedding after all). Trust is all. The wedding planner should be there to advise you. You will need a reality check to be able to set some parameters for the big day.

4. You also have to decide if you want your wedding gown to be made to order in the Philippines, or just get an off-the-rack wedding gown. Personally I highly recommend that you get your wedding gown custom-built wherever you are. At least you can be happy about how it fits. A Philippine made-to-order gown is feasible as long as you have yourself measured professionally wherever you are. Fr.

HOW TO PLAN 02

FAITH IS POWER

NANCY Hanel & Associates staff behind the event's success: Binoy Lorenzo, Tami and Saad, Nika Parsotan, Trish Sumbingco, Kirstie Dita and Kim Lee (foreground)

CECILE Feliciano, Moses Pelgot and Rodyn Calada

SEN. Loren Legarda, Bo Philippe, Lucy Bolivar-to, Lyn Tamparong, Ricky Tamparong

Hawaiian luau for a second wedding

Text by Maurice Arcadio
Photos by Alex Yon Hagon

CHIT Santa and Nena Santos

IF THERE IS A THEME BASH MOM can't top out to, it's a luau. But this was not the usual Hawaiian party, dahlings. It was, would you believe, a wedding. Actually a second wedding, pulong-pulo.

So on we trod made our way into the venue, and got the customary Hawaiian "Aloha" welcome, but this time interspersed with Shalom, the Hebrew counterpart, from the proud parents of the radiant bride, Tami Hanel.

The whole scene was like a magical night at the posh estates of the rich and famous, the Manila Polo Club overlooking Polo Park. The Cirgas Village glistened in the sunset, bedecked as it was with gorgeous, colorful tropical foliage and twinkling fresh lights. The delicately crisp sunshine and exhilarating breeze put all of us in the best mood for a fun outdoor wedding.

Welcoming us were the popular Hanel family, businessman Itshak Hanel and his wife, Rosary Hanel of Nancy Hanel & Associates, Inc., protegees, together with their children Ben, Shaw and David.

They were there to celebrate Tami and her husband Saad Ahmed's second wedding reception, the first having been held in Toronto late last July year where they exchanged their "I do's."

This one-of-a-kind occasion was certainly a celebration of life, love and harmony as the diverse cultures of the bride and groom's families meshed with the Hanels' Jole de vivre, dahlings.

At dinnertime, the invitees couldn't get enough of the huge buffet table's superb offerings, Hawaiian style. We were also entertained by news broadcaster Cinderella Sherna Nicandro's string quartet, with songs from the Broadway musicals "South Pacific" and "Fiddler on the Roof."

Highlighting the affair was a video of the beautiful Toronto wedding ceremony and the lavish banquet that followed. Next up was high-energy entertainment provided by the rhythmic Tribu Caribeo percussion band, the Tahitian and Latin dancers, and the Hawaiian live dancers, all of which provided a change of pace, pelangan.

TIME Hanel family: Yuna Hanel and Saad's brother, Nawaal Ahmed; Back row: Itshak, Nancy, Tami, David and Saad

NEWLYWEDS Tami and Saad, under the wedding arch, for this second Hawaiian theme wedding at the Polo Club

SAAD and Tami in their Hajal mona, a traditional pre-wedding ceremony that took place in Toronto a day before their civil wedding

For the finale, Itshak Hanel got the crowd to frenzied cheering with the traditional Israeli "Hora dance," which was punctuated in by bouts of screams. The crowd then segued to retro and Latin line dances led by dance guru choreographer Mark Espinosa.

By 1 a.m. it was time to call it a night, dahlings. But not before everyone was given a token of remembrance of the colorful, enchanted wedding of Tita and his fiancé Ahmed. Cheers, dahlings!

BACANI-DEL ROSARIO NUPTIALS

Tuscany-inspired wedding in Tagaytay

ROSELLE Rebano, Cora del Rosario, Micky Maloderos, Rosa de Castro, Alice Pilares, bride and groom, Asher Basaco, Teri Rosario, Ruben del Rosario, Basil Rosas-Chua, Sunny Reyes

CALOY Bacani, Kim Bacani, Steve Plaza, Melissa Plaza, bride and groom, Yolo Bacani, Steven Bacani

CARINE DEL ROSARIO MET ALJO BACANI IN NOVEMBER 2004 during her three-month assignment for a multinational bank in Tokyo, through a close friend who introduced her via e-mail to Aljo, then working for an international bank company.

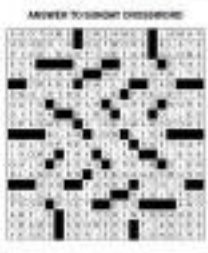
The next two months were a whirlwind of romantic dates and sun-sol Tokyo trips that steadily drew them to each other. Distance did not become a hindrance when she came back to Manila. Their relationship was sustained via daily Skype sessions, countless e-mails and the occasional shuttling between Tokyo and Manila.

After only six months since their first meeting, they decided to get engaged in July 2007.

With the Shalet de Sica Chapel in Tagaytay Midlands providing a breathtaking view of Taal Lake and the surrounding lush greens, their recent Tuscany-inspired wedding last March 1 was truly an event to remember.

Carine's mentor Mitsie Moreno transformed the Tagaytay Midlands Veranda into a spectacle of orange lighting with various table arrangements of roses, lisianthus and orchids, mixed with grapes, oranges and pears.

Two of the pregnant's highlights were the videos specially made by loved ones to tell their unique love story and the surprise salsa number prepared by the couple. To cap everything off, Carine's dad's band, The Hot Shizzards, played while fireworks lit the Tagaytay sky.



ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

ALDRICH del Rosario, bride and groom, Leslie del Rosario, Johnny del Rosario

THE NEWLYWEDS Carine del Rosario and Aljo Bacani

HOPE IS POWER

FLORES-CRUZ

Dr. Christian Javier Flores, son of Constantino and Stella Flores, will wed **Marisol Angeles Cruz**, daughter of Ricardo and Francia Cruz of Bacolod City, on June 7, 5 p.m. at Virgen Sang Rio angry Chapel (Dia. Gaza Chapel), Bacolod City.

The bride will wear a silk Mikado corset ball gown in bone white, embellished with embroidery, glass beads and crystals by Tony de Ramos. Her entourage will don gowns in raisin orange hue.

The couple will reside in Lantau Island, Hong Kong.

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the Inquirer, PO Box 2103 Makati Central Post Office 1260 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the readers.

PHELAN-BIRIN

Thomas Joseph Phelan, son of **William J. Phelan** and **Kathrin A. Miller**, will exchange vows with **Grace Patricia Birin**, daughter of **Justice Abdulwahid** and **Gwen Birin**, on June 6 at the Manila Cathedral, Intramuros, Manila. Reception will be held at Villa Intramuralda, Arzobispo corner Cabildo Streets, Intramuros, Manila.

The gowns of the entourage were designed by Emily Syed (EIY Creations).

RAMOS-AUSTRIA

Felix Ramos Jr. will wed **Lilibeth Austria** on June 22 at Villa Montero Resort Hotel, Batangas.

CASTOR-DE LA CRUZ

Philip Charles D. Castor, son of **Philip and Carmen Castor**, and **Louis Regina T. de la Cruz**, daughter of **Reynaldo** and **Leonarda de la Cruz**, exchanged vows last April 14 at Chapelle Notre Dame De Vic, Kembrook Gardens.

Relatives make life miserable for her and her partner

DEAR EMILY,

I have relatives who also happen to be our neighbors who are always onto us. They would verbally and sometimes physically abuse my kids as if they want to start a fight with me and my live-in partner. My cousins hate my partner so much and we don't even know what we have done. I talked with my dad about this problem but he's not on our side. It makes me feel so hurt and betrayed by my own family. What should I do with this kind of people?

MICHELLE

You may not have an inkling of what you've done to them because they can't be doing what they're doing just because they're plain malice! People don't take ever and manipulate other people's lives without a strong and valid reason. Why are they able to oppress you this way? Do you owe them money? Did they send you to school? Gave you your job? Say favors at all in the distant past? Is there anything in your life that can be reason for them to blackmail you, but can't and reasoned to just bullying you?

Why do they hate your guts? Did he steal you from your husband and broke up your marriage? Is he mortifyingly handsome or downright successful in his job making jokes of coworkers—reasons that intercede us? Or is he a plain bum whom they suspect of flooding you dry? It is beyond belief that these relatives of yours are doing this for no reason at all except to make your life miserable.

If there is absolutely nothing on your plate to cause their insanely behavior—you have no alternative but to confront them head-on and bloody well put an end to this. Stop talking about it. Do something!

E-mail the author at emanvs.lm@inquirer.com.ph. Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to Emanvs. Visit www.pda.gov.ph and listen to Ms Manvels co-host the program "Kalilimuan Pilipinas," 7:25-8:30 a.m., 88.9mhz/Friday, on dzRH 666 AM.

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Manvels

Wedding expo on June 14-15

TRADE ADVERTISING EXHIBitions and Conventions International (Tradecon) Inc. will hold the Bridal Expo-Derby Beginnings from 3 at the World Trade Center on June 14 and 15.

More than 250 wedding suppliers will exhibit.

The Bridal Expo-Derby Beginnings is a one-stop-shop for all things about weddings. It offers promos, discounts, giveaways and special deals.

Special prizes to be raffled include a honeymoon and a Boughaboyan Franchise Showcase from Filamperatures, Inc.

Highlight of the event is the fashion show by Wedding Designers of the Philippines.

There will also be performances by choirs, string quartets and live bands.

The Bridal Expo-Derby Beginnings is organized by Tradecon, Inc. in cooperation with the World Trade Center Metro Manila, Department of Tourism, Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp., Laboratorio, Kinaopio, Wedding Designers of the Philippines, Bikke Estates and Filamperatures, Inc. The official host concessionaire is SM Makati Skyline.

Call 4403116, 4405208, 3950909, 4027115, 4374065 loc. 108-107.

Admission is free for those who will pre-register at www.tradeshow-po.com or www.tradecentre.com, text names, contact information at 0928-9396751, or e-mail at tradecorc.inc@gmail.com. Online registration will be valid only until 12 noon of June 13.

Wilma Doesnar and Phoemela Barranda dressed in bridal-top gowns

Bridal fair

CELEBRATIONS! A BRIDAL EXPO and Special Events Expo set a wedding club covering a 4,000 sq m area at the SMX Convention Center, the Philippines' biggest convention center.

Specials-ords were created by PEM Cocktails and Bon Vivant to free-flowing cocktails and coffee.

La Bella Rose & Co., Singapore brings and introduces to the Philippine serenaded the audience.

Featured in the fair were suppliers specializing in various wedding products and services: caterers, photographers, florists, coordinators, souvenir makers, cake specialists, invitation printers and others.

The National Statistics Office's mobile services made it convenient for soon-to-wed couples to fulfill their marriage requirements.

Designer Liezl unveiled his creations in a grand fashion show featuring Marian Rivera, Iliana Dorsett, Phoemela Barranda and others.

Food tasting was offered by SMX Classic Food International.

A raffle draw highlighted the event. The winners were Lara Arza H. Tabias (first prize), who got a round-trip ticket for two to Singapore with hotel accommodation for three days, two nights and breakfast, courtesy of Scherl's Travel & Tours; Jaymore Bagan (second prize), who got a pair of Indian Wedding Bands from Goldenbells Jewelry; and Jann Tabuay (third prize), who got a formal gown worth P5,000 from Liezl and P5,000 worth of Exclusively the Barong Tagalog.

This event is organized by Glen Li. Bee Events in conjunction with VS & P Classic Food International, Grand Terrace and Goldenbells Jewelry.

Other sponsors were Konsepto, Goldilocks Bakeshop, Bates de Dos, Globe Telecom, Herb Globe, Dulos Laundry, The Party Channel, All Occasion Cozy, Weddings at Work.Com, Innercage Inc., Jerbinson Stylist Pl. dressed Fans Lights & Sounds.

Media partners were Manila Bulletin's Lifestyle, Wedding Essentials, Metro Weddings, 101.9 Rx Life, DZMM Teleradyo, DZMM Radyo Patrol and UNTV 37.

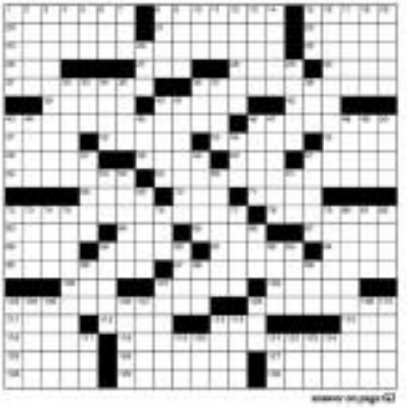
ANNETTE Corsentio Victorio-inspired bridal gown.

GOLDILOCKS Bakeshop, one of the main sponsors

Sunday Crossword

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

STARS



answers on page G2

LOVE is POWER

NEWLYWEDS Migs and Grizzy Camacho pose for a photo

The groom's parents congratulated the newlyweds via a huge banner that unfurled from a chopper

CAMACHO-BAUTISTA NUPTIALS

Wedding vows in Bora

EMMY Sanchez, the newlyweds and Phoenix Sanchez

WITH grandmother Leonarda Camacho

By Pamela Ayson
Contributor

IT WAS A WEDDING LIKE NO OTHER. From the moment Migs Camacho popped the question to Grizzy Bautista at Gail Misalucha's star-studded wedding in January 2007, with all their friends and family with them, everyone knew their wedding was going to be grand.

With lots of Boracay-loving memories to relish and having a knack for celebrating in style, the couple came up with one of the most memorable weddings Boracay has ever seen.

It was just fitting to have the wedding on the island, because this was where they first met and got exclusive rock-cakes. After scenes of drama, Migs realized that, as he put it, "we've gone through so much, going through both good and bad times together, yet we still find ourselves in love..."

Then, more seriously, and weaned to always make Boracay a special part of their lives.

During the wedding weekend, Migs and Grizzy hosted dinners and cocktails at their favorite restaurants. It was a nice dinner for the couple to have everyone they loved and cared for in paradise.

Those guests, numbering 540, were all there to witness Migs and Grizzy tie the knot in the afternoon of Dec. 1, 2007.

Happy tears

Bonnie had to hold back their tears when Migs turned up at the altar, looking great in his Boulyn Lagdameo bareng set. The ceremony and principal sponsors, all smiling, entered the lovely church to the tune of "Everything" by Lifehouse.

But the happy tears started rolling down parents' cheeks when bemedaled bride Grizzy walked down the aisle in a "Swan Lake" gown by Monique Lhuillier with an April-cool flores de bouquet. The radiant bride glided down the aisle to the tune of "Saving" by Rhea.

She was an angel walking down the asymmetric-cascaded lace corset with delicate flowers around her in full bloom. Frosted roses, whimsical drapings and jewelry drives...the place was made up like heaven.

All eyes were on Grizzy at that moment, including those of the groom himself, waiting at the altar with a big smile on his face and a ready heart to make Bernardo Jr. and Cheryl Bautista's only daughter Grizzy his beloved wife.

Atypical reception

The reception was held at Diamond Resort, the very place where they first met five years ago.

"I wanted a reception look that wasn't a typical one for weddings. I searched and researched for a theme and I'm so glad I came across this tropical all, not even related to a wedding at all, in a travel magazine. It reflected the colors of the sunset: deep orange, burnt orange, golden yellow, bright yellow.

From there I told Migs I wanted the motif to reflect the colors of the sunset, since Boracay sunsets are what we always look forward to when we're on the island. It's a tradition for us to witness it as a number of magazines to recommend based on your interdestination.

3. Help yourself by going online and checking sites of potential suppliers like the photographer and videographer. You can always double-check with your wedding planner and ask for advice.

7. Have that you have chosen your suppliers the next step is executing payments.

I can suggest two ways of doing this: Assign a relative here in Manila as a point person in disbursing these payments or wire it to your planner but make sure she wants you the scanned receipt as deposit slips of the supplier that needs to be paid. With your supplies in place, you can start discussing the details of the wedding which you can do via e-mail.

8. A word of caution from your planner is good enough as you are one in the dark about what is happening with all the plans. Remember, your wedding planner is very vital in the

CAROL Garcia, mentor of the bride Cheryl Bautista, the couple and Cynthia Gallaghy

MAID-of-honor Nina Santos, best man Ted Camacho, the couple and maid-of-honor Clarissa Adduru-Castillo

CHERYL Bautista, Ninay Wenceslao and Malou Perez. Standing: Marie de Jesus, the couple, Mon Veloso, Raymond Serrano, Jackie Jesa, Jun Bautista

More surprises

Over dinner, more surprises transpired as friends and family showcased their talents.

Henri Dominic Ily and Grizzy's cousin Artista Garcia-Moreno introduced video presentations by Migs' brother Ted and his fiancée Nina.

Mommy Nerdy (Migs' label) and Sup. Claudine Cojuangco-Lacuna's duet to every guest's delight, Migs' uncles Lito and Al Camacho treated a mic with Migs' father Teodoro and sang beautiful melodies as well. Even Lou Gonzales, Migs' youngest brother, played the saxophone with the band as a surprise number.

All throughout the program, there was endless supply of alcohol. The 400 bottles of wine and 50-piece old Blue Label scotch were all wiped out.

There also was a special round that served Chester Burger, a favorite snack of the couple whenever they were in Boracay, as their souvenir. "Migs & Grizzy's Best Burgers."

Migs and Cabey enjoyed the evening with

CECILLE Salonga, Marilen Garcia-Rivera, the bride and Ron Dominic Ily

ANNA Palabyab-Rufino, the couple and Raymond Rufino

their first dance, to the tune of "Love Falls Into Place" and "Got To Give It Up." Their then offered heartfelt toasts to each other.

The rest of the evening was left to partying as the Swiss Meadows band kept the happy mood going.

"The night after the wedding," Migs says, recalls, "about friends and family had a seafood barbecue by the beach at Willy's house. We let Kembungs, which are fat-as-balloons mackerels out of pajos. Talk is a good luck ritual in Thailand. The night sky was lit up with Chinese lamps that looked like glowing jelly fishes!"

Seeing the couple during that wedding weekend, you could see their love every time they gazed into each other's eyes. You could also see it in the memorable, one-of-a-kind wedding they created for themselves.

From page G3

How to plan your wedding from abroad

veyors in your entourage living in the Philippines can go directly to your designers or choices.

6. If you've decided to get a wedding planner, you should have answers to three basic questions that will be asked of you: the kind of wedding that you want, your working budget, and your priorities. Your wedding planner should

THE POWER WILL BE YOURS ON JUNE 2

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ermie C. Velarde

IN THIS ISSUE

- Warning signs for young stars Viewfinder /2
- Network Bigwig bans love tandem Rushes/14
- Arnel Pineda wows Ellen Degeneres /14
- Filipinos on NY stage OnlyInHollywood /21

"I TOLD her to relax, breathe and smile," Lani Mercado said. Her daughter, young bride Iyah Felicia, did just several times during the wedding.

Piolo goes indie again

ACTOR PIOLO PASCUAL HAS STARTED WORK ON HIS THIRD indie movie, "Manila," a rom-biz directed by Adolfo Alix Jr. and Raya Martin. "Manila" is a tribute to Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal. Pascual is also co-producer. Joining him in the cast are Rosanna Roces, Mitch Valdes, Joel Torre, Shaina, Jay Manalo, Krista Limbo and Alessandra de Rossi.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

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Waterworks at the wedding

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jon Victor Pascuzo

IYAH FELICIA REVILLA SHED tears several times on her wedding day. One of the first caught on camera was when she met her mother, actress and TV host Lani Mercado, at the altar.

Iyah tied the knot with boyfriend Vince del Rosario Wednesday afternoon in the Manila Cathedral in intramuros.

"I told her to relax, breathe and smile," Mercado said.

Iyah, four months pregnant, is 18; Vince is 23.

Iyah's father, Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., was obviously holding back tears himself throughout the ceremony, as were Vince's parents, Jorge del Rosario and Angela Otero Del Rosario.

The senator told the media shortly before the wedding that he asked his daughter if she was really prepared to get married. "She just nodded and smiled her sweet smile," Revilla recounted. "She was very calm."

Not for long.

Again the young bride was photographed lightly sobbing when she danced with dad during the reception at the Makati Shangri-la.

Revilla recalled that Mercado was also 18 when they got married, and he was 19. "Iyah is emotionally mature," Revilla said. "I know she can handle this."

Proudly Pinoy in French fest

FDCP unveils partial list of local films set for screening in Paris

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

JEM LEBRASAN'S "THIRD" AND ALVIN Yapan's "Tabyo" are in competition in the Feature and Short Film categories, respectively, at the Festival Paris Cinema, which runs from July 1 to 12 in the French capital.

The Cinemalaya winners are but two of about 60 Filipino films set for screening at the festival.

The Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) released to Inquirer Entertainment on Friday a partial list of the films included in the event's Philippine program.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

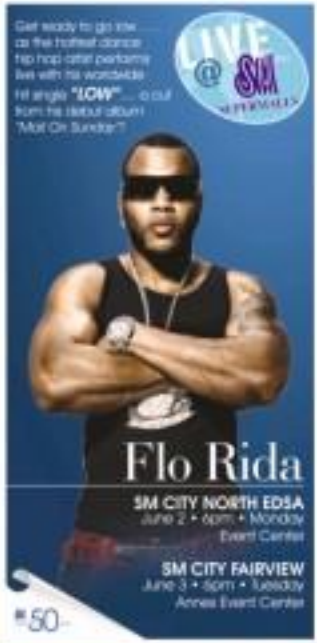
Digan Santiago of the FDCP explained that the original goal was to come up with 40 titles: 10 mainstream, 10 independent, 10 classics and 10 from the Cinemalaya category.

Santiago is executive director of the Philippine Export Services and chair of Task Force Paris Cinema. FDCP is the main patron of the Philippine program.

After a series of e-mails with Jeremy Segay, the festival's French consultant, the FDCP and Paris Cinema have come up with a working list, which is still being finalized at press time.

Santiago said FDCP's original list had undergone revisions due to numerous factors, most pressing of which is the unavailability of some

PHOTOS/ 6



DID YOU KNOW...

'Monologues' in Manila tonight

THE NINE VOICE Company presents "The Vagina Monologues" today with Glaiza's "A Memory, a Monologue, a Rant and a Prayer" at the PICC The Arts, 7 p.m. The event features Monique Wilson and Chesie Gil, and hopes to raise funds for the Filipina Comfort Women Group, Lila Pilipina.

Rob Aside and Wilson direct. Call 896-6655.

Goodbye, Charlie Green

FILIPINO SINGER CHELI PERFORMER Charlie Green was booted out of the "Pinoy's Got Talent" semifinals Wednesday night.

Green failed to make the Final Top 10 of the talent reality show in which another Filipino, Mahiwaga Dorotan, is still in contention. Dorotan went to appear on the other semifinal competition yesterday.

The show's creator and judge, Steve Gorrell, thought Green made a "bad song choice" for original song, "All I Wanna Do Is Sing") but endorsed him to advance to the next round. The two other judges, Ryan Morgan and Amanda Holden disagreed and ended the boy's aspirations.

Jayzel Sevi Diaga Jr., Gerry Pano

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NARNIA
PRINCE CASPIAN
THE EXHIBIT

Early

SOME YOUNG STARS ARE MAKING it big this season. Will their resistance to their elders's spiteful ascendancy in the months to come? That depends on how they build up their strong points and improve their performances.

The especially unsure few should absorb their weak points and work on them, to their stellar appeal immediate.

Not easy

Unfortunately, this isn't easy to do in local show biz, where sycophants abound. They shower stars with so much praise that the young luminaries fail to objectively identify their defects. Perhaps it takes an outsider and more objective observer to point out these minus factors, before they become glaring enough to compromise the stars' outwardly audible stars' longrange careers.

So, if the luminaries in question are interested, here are "early warning"

'Sisa' preems on

AMID OF THEATER, COMPUTER-GENerated images and new age musicinspired jazz and influences in Maryl's film described as the newest version of Dr. Ann Rikli's novel "Noli Me Tangere."

The source, to hide is that follows up of the same creative team behind the underpreviously produced "Haus," premieres in select theaters on June 12, as homage to the 120th year of Philippine Independence.

Confrontation

One of the venues to watch out for is when Dr. Raul (Alan Peale) engages in an imaginary confrontation with the characters he created like Chel Tentenazio, Asunto Chichi-

SCENE from Jun Lana's "Bitas"

Proudly Pinoy in

From page 6

Bitas.

In thanking the Int. Jetpay and Kadilagan International, several leadership blocks that illustrate the real value of film as showing in the country.

Jennings related that the FDCP is having difficulty finding good, French-subtitled copies of films to screen as Jack Rand's "Gagamboy" released in 2004 and screened at the Pinoy Kung International Film Festival and Bit Ultan Film Fest is truly that same year "I was told the film was lost," Jennings said.

Bad condition

Jennings recounted that Lourdes Cardona's "Isa si Magkasama," released in 1981, is in such a bad condition that "it could not be duplicated or restored in public." Good news is, FDCP found Mike de Leon's landmark 1980 comedy "Kakaba Ba Ka Ba?" in the Cultural Center of the Philippines, said Jennings.

Among, Fast to receive a formal invitation from France was Jun Chavez's 15th anniversary offering, Dido Boko's "Caregiver" which was chosen as the gala presentation for the Philippine showcase.

FDCP head Federico S. Aleman and Philippine Ambassador to France Jose Abere Zaide, along with "Caregiver" star Sharon Cuneta, are expected to grace the gala screening at the SM2 Multicinema on July 4.

Also invited to the festival are actor Pedro Eternal and Judy Ann Santos, director Brillante "Dekada '70" and "Bitas," respectively—will be screened at Bilitz in Champs Elysees on July 5.

Working list

And also scheduled are director to Bluemakers Joey Gosiengfiao and Danilo Montalan.

The Philippine contingent was received in the festival by Paolo Bhaye

warning signs for young comers

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Friday on the one hand, and was bland on the other.

So, to do better, Gerald should focus on making his portrayals stronger, more solid and more intense. He can't getting any younger, so it's time to firm up his characterizations with greater technique and insight.

Rising star

On the new daytime drama series, "Tayong sa Dulohiin," the rising star is Bernadette Sembrano. He's always liked her work, even since she came on strong in the TV talent search show that discovered her.

But, she can do even better if the channel's only on her new TV series to live up her reputation as a good actress.

Mostly melodrama

"TV acting" these days is mostly of the melodramatic sort, so Bernie might be better served if she were an singer or does a "Maalaala Mo Kaya" episode, which would provide her with greater opportunities to show just how good a thespian she's become.

For her part, young teen Sam Concepcion is currently basking in the good fortune he's been securing, particularly for being tapped by Dreamscape to reveal his version of "Kung Fu Fighting," which is included in the sound track album of the animated film. Sam is the first Filipino talent to sing for the leading Hollywood film company. The album will be distributed throughout Asia.

On the minus side, Sam's singing and dancing style is "inspired" too closely by Gary Valenciano. We can understand why Sam would want to emulate Gary's performance style, but we must observe that one of Gary's new sons is already doing this, so Sam and his mentors should figure out his own, unique performance style.

Since Sam comes from a family of theater people, he should be able to dig deep into his emotional and thespian resources, so that his nascent performing career will continue to fly high as he's newly-winged.

'Acoustic Love Affair'

The "Acoustic Love Affair: The Best-selling Playlist" album contains 19 acoustic renditions of memorable love-among them, "Please Don't Go," "Lovin' You," "I Just Drop In Your Love," "If You Leave Me Now," "Evergreen," "Goodbye Girl," "Time Times A Lady," "Just The Way You Are," "One Day in Your Life," and "Best Of My Love."

GENERATION AWARD

Adam Sandler became a box-office superstar by interpreting his favorite character: the repressed man-child. Now the 41-year-old actor-comedian will be rewarded for his antics with the Generation Award at the 2008 MTV Movie Awards, to be presented today at the Gibson Amphitheater in Universal City, California. He will receive the award for his "amazing contribution to Hollywood" and years of entertaining the network's young viewers, MTV announced.

NOW SHOWING

RP Independence Day

Magpiel, Tia Sebel (Gina Villa) and the young actors portraying Bandio (Lucheart Dimaranan) and Crispin (Pedro Leonard Pimentel).

Stylized

The tandem of stage directors Frank G. Rivera, who expanded Jhoni's episodic role in the novel and CJ Antolihao, who gets his directorial baptism with "Sinat" (for starters, say that this is one film which both the old and the young generations can relate to because it's stylized and has been adapted to the times.

Executive producer Carlo Maceda promised: "Just like we did with Noah," we offer a quality movie that entertains, informs and educates."

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CARETAKER -G	21 -R13	SEX AND THE CITY -R13
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"Will give audiences a JOLT of EXCITEMENT in the same way that seeing Indiana Jones back in action will thrill audiences this summer."
-Phil Zanuso / Deadline Magazine

"Sex and the City," is the movie that fans are most excited about heading into Hollywood's key summer season.
The May 1, 2008 11:00am EST By Bob Fascinelli

In the poll of nearly 420,000 respondents, "Sex and the City" proved most exciting to 32 percent of the movie fans, compared with 31 percent for "Indiana Jones."
-reported from Yahoo! MOVIES REUTERS

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ELLEN meets the band and its new front man

'Unbelievable, unbelievable'

JOURNEY VOCALIST Arnel Pineda, in a text message to Inquirer Entertainment on Friday, said he was reacting to San Francisco Bay's blowing a round of media interviews, two days after making his TV debut as new front man of the top 1970s pop rock US band on the ceremonially syndicated show "Ellen," aired from Burbank, Cal.

On the show host Ellen DeGeneres noted, "Unbelievable ... unbelievable!"

Broadcast in the US last Wednesday (Thursday in RP), Journey's segment was immediately uploaded on YouTube, the video-sharing website where Pineda was discovered by band co-founder and lead guitarist Neal Schon.

The band, gearing up for a 68-date world tour to promote its new album, "Revelation," played two songs on "Ellen," The first, "Separate Ways," showed Pineda jumping around, clutching the microstand, authoritatively tackling his emotional role. The Pinoy singer, the group's youngest member at 40, finished with flying colors.

The second number would've been a TV debut, as well, for Journey's new single, "After All Those Years." But Arnel's mic system went dead during the song setup; it was cut off the air, because the show was running on overtime.

Journey hits the road starting June 8 in Spain, and proceeds to Germany the Netherlands, UK and Ireland, before swinging back to the US. The tour winds up in October in Canada.

A November date is being eyed for a first-ever show in Manila. Poncho Concepcion

ARNEL sings Journey's new single, "After All These Years"

SHOW TIME

POCHOLO Hadlin presents the girls and guys of the long-running revue.

'Bedazzled 8' at Club Mwah

MORE curvaceous Paris Hilton-wannabes

SWANK Like, at something like that.

IMAGINE BRITTY HORSES PRANCING about, alighting from a private plane, pursued by the paparazzi, and capping off in a sportscar—with an inquiring camera!

Or pop diva Christina Aguilera taking center stage, dancing furiously while belting her top hits, within inches from your seat!

How about a spoof of the Broadway musical, "Hair of La Mancha," or body, restaurant numbers from Rob Fraser's Academy Award-winning musical film, "All That Jazz," as choreographed by a Pinoy?

All these and more are the attractions in "Bedazzled 8"—the latest in a series of monthly entertainment specials presented by Club Mwah in Muntinlupa.

Pocholo Medillin, art director Chris Nicolas' assistant partner in the theater has become for Vegas-type revues, says, "Everything in 'Bedazzled 8' is new. Even costumes or sets, props... We don't scrimp on the budget. We spend authenticity, quality and world-class production values."

Show time is 9 p.m., Wednesdays to Saturdays. Club Mwah is at the 3/F, The Strand Tower, 832 Real Ave., Muntinlupa. Call 552-2820 or 585-7643.

Distributed by: WSMPI Presents Columbia Pictures International Inc.

Network Bigwig 'bans' couple

By the Entertainment Staff

THIS REAL-LIFE LOVE team incurred the ire of Network Bigwig, executives for power tripping.

Hint, it was the tandem's Make Half. MH had a very public spurned suitor in the channel's primal male talent. To retaliate, MS banned MH from a number of TV shows that MS oversees.

Then the love team's female half had a very public rift with the entire network. MS didn't think twice about "persuading" FH from pursuing an award show.

But the "ban" apparently didn't work, at least since, because FH is seen thrummy with the host of a show that MS handles.

Holiday Heartbreak returns

Remember last month's Holiday Heartbreak, in which Lover—male whose name is being used by an executive going to Bicol gay clubs?

HB's first heads with guys turned out to be traumatic. As it turns, he was molested by an Older Hunk in a dressing room. The molestation ultimately failed because HB vomited in their company.

Years later, HB finally let the gay hunk adore a TV Host presented him as "gift" to the Closeted Son of a politician.

Unlikely relationship breaker

If Megan Salazar can't sing upsetting revenge against a former Diva, it's because of the gender of the Third Party in their break-up.

TP spurn long, lustrous hair, all right, but MS romantic rival is also a he. TP vehemently denies that he's MS's new love...and breakfaster.

Battle of the ads

After Angel Locsin scored one of GMA 7, her career faltered for a bit. But, the girl bounced back by hooking endorsement deals previously held by Kapuso talents—like DKEastAsia's (Marian Rivera) and Mpay F (Rachel Ann Go). Sweet revenge!

The Repuso camp retaliated by clinching one of Angel's exes deals, Jag, for Marian Rivera.

Dueling Divas

Speaking of Marian and Angel...

Marian is supposedly hesitant to accept the role of "Darna," afraid of being compared with Angel.

Now that KC Concepcion has expressed interest in the superheroine role, Marian has changed her mind.

Asked about the plum project, KC said, "Who wouldn't want to be part of Pinoy pop culture?"

Pressed on comments supposedly KC passed the buck to Richard Gutierrez, saying she'll only play Darna in his Captain Barbell.

In true leading man fashion, Richard quipped, "Shall be a female role me."

Yes to Madonna

LILONGWE, Malawi—A Malawian court has approved pop star Madonna's adoption of David Banda, a baby boy she took home from an orphanage in the impoverished southern African nation. Reuters

Depressed, not drugged

LOS ANGELES—Alyssa Diaz, who screamed to the "Spider-Man" movies, says she checked into rehab earlier this year because she was suffering from depression, not hauling drugs or alcohol. In an interview with E! Online, the 26-year-old actress said she went to the Cirque Lodge Treatment Center in Utah—which has also hosted Lindsay Lohan and Britney Spears. Reuters

Swayze 'responding well'

LOS ANGELES—"Dirty Dancing" star Patrick Swayze is responding well to treatment for pancreatic cancer, his wife Royle magazine Swayze, 55, who announced in March that he had been diagnosed with cancer, is receiving treatment at Stanford University Medical Center near San Francisco. Reuters

Not going to jail

LOS ANGELES—"CSI" actor Kiely Donavan won't go to jail. Donavan pleaded guilty in two of three counts of felony drug possession on Wednesday but will not have prison following his drug arrest last month, according to his lawyer. Donavan would have served up to three years and eight months behind bars. "Once Gary completes 30 hours of a diversion program, his case will be entirely dismissed," lawyer Shawn Chapman Holley told The Associated Press

Big breakup

LOS ANGELES—Hollywood star Gwyneth Chesney and his girlfriend Sarah Lamont have split up after dating for about a year. People magazine reported on its website, citing an unidentified source. The 40-year-old actor and producer who was twice named "the sexiest man alive" by the celebrity magazine had first met Lamont, 20, four years ago while she worked as a cocktail server, People said. They began dating in June 2007. AFP

Seeking divorce

MIAMI—The wife of 03-actor Bill Murray has filed for divorce, accusing him of drug abuse, violence and abandonment, court documents in South Carolina show. Jennifer Butler and Murray were married for 16 years and had four children, but they separated more than a year ago. her petition filed in Charleston county this week showed. AFP

Top of the tabloids

The top three hit stories in local tabloids this week. (And why we are amazed, if we are amazed.)

Yes or no?

• Kinasal ng anak si Bong Revilla nanuli nang di nasabay?

• Ayaw ba talaga ni Bong Revilla kay Lani Pino?

• Lumalapalan si Jake Vargas, hindi na nagpapakita kay Maricel Laxa-Gibbs, nag-hahire na ito ng mas? (Repeat offense?)

• Judy Ann Santos nag-e-ehersisyo kaka! mula Repentistas sa Espanol? (Repeat reason)

• Judy Ann ... ayaw na ayaw makasama si Pinoy Pawisali? Goes Aqua?)

• Kim Chiu lumalaki ang dibdib dahil buntis? (Breast?)

• Jewel, buntis ba siya ang sanay na siguro kay Ritz? (Ano yan, wedding present?)

• Kim, nilait daw si Isabel (Who's dance Gerald?)

• Debbie Peralta, ayaw daw Mark Bautista para sa anak niyang si Kylie? (Cause Kapuso Kylie?)

• John Lloyd Cruz, nakipag-ot sa pagpe-perform nila si Sarah Geronimo? Dahil pinapahiwalay ng Kapuso Kylie?)

• Bernardo Bernardo, nanunuhol daw kay Jake Cuenca! Totoo (Sabi)

• Karylle, binash, binatikos si Marian Rivera! Di ka si Marian ang manganga!

Amazed

• Marian nakakakaba para pulong ng kung mga (Do tips.)

• Dingdong Dantes pinagsing-pal si Marian! (At, bayat nagsilit si KC)

• Marian dapat mag-sorry!

• KC Concepcion, nagsilit ng damdit para manalay ang mama mo si Richard Gutierrez sa GMA Films! (Concentration, devotion... whatever or another)

• Ang bango-bango ni Richard!—KC (Mga ka-tapi)

• Ups at wala ang tape do kay KC—Richard. (Naku, getting physical na.)

• Angel Locsin, maayos para Aiza Richard at KC if, he'l entrust (Hindi)

Good luck or bad?

• Jake Vargas ang talagang ginto Regine Velasquez or Ogie Alcasid?

• Regine ang sapat ang ng love life or sex life? (For sure?)

• Pag-umin sina Ogie at Regine sa kanilang relasyon, dapat na ang Asawad? Dyosmeeee tell them dyan time is gold.)

• Delights si Zsazsa Padilla, hindi tatanong kinalap ng? (Necessary?)

• Kompliyan Mayuralo, kalipalan pa rin si Patrick Garcia! (Tama na, tama na, please!)

• Jennylyn Mercado pa rin sponsor pa rin ang mahirapanak si Jennylyn? (Mahirap na kasi ito?)

(From Boredsexy Boredoki)
E-mail us: mabait@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

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PEKAS

Tony nominee pens Filipino lyrics for Pinay starring in musical

MARIE-France Arcilla: "Would my character be the first Filipina on Broadway—singing in Filipino! The room should be overwhelming"

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rubeo V. Negrales

LOS ANGELES—"Nosgoths ako high!" said actress Marie-France Arcilla via e-mail about being surprised by Tony Award nominees and rumors Broadway sensation, — Lin Manuel Miranda, asks Filipino lyrics in a new song he wrote for her character in a reimaging of

On musical, "Working."

Lin-Manuel, up for four Original Score and Best Actor in a Musical for the acclaimed "In the Heights" in the coming Tony Awards, contributed the tune with Tagalog lyrics and another new song to "Working," which is getting good reviews for Marie-France, her cute mates and the new production itself. "Working," with a book by Stephen Schwartz, the legendary composer behind such hit musicals as "Wicked," "Pippin" and "Godspell," and movies ("Enchanted" is his latest), is currently playing at the Arsht Repertory Theatre in Miami, Florida through June 8.

It a hoped that, with the favorable buzz, "Working" will also play in Broadway when it was originally staged in 1978 and earned several Tony Award nominations, including Best Book of a Musical for Stephen

Songs from James Taylor, et al

The musical, about the joys and frustrations of various workers, from immigrants (In John cahoots duty "So what we can sasan to do") to flight attendants, was updated to reflect the

TURN TO P.

FILIPINO-American actors Cesar Quintos (middle) and Ryo Chua (right) with Mike Hall (left) and Gavin Alexander during carnival, dress in "Pippin," another musical by "Working" creator Stephen Schwartz which is reopening an extended run in LA.

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JOMARI YLLANA Signs Contract with RAPIDÉ

Photo shows, from left, franchise Operations Manager Fred Santiago, Mr. Jomari Yllana, Managing Director Rene E. Limcaoco, Cabanatuan franchisee Mr. Eliot Marcelo Cayetano, and General Manager Noel Bio Ang during the signing of contracts.

Two new franchisees signed up with Rapidé Auto Service Experts, the largest chain of automotive service centers.

Mr. Jomari Yllana, a well-known local actor and car enthusiast, is taking over the operations of Rapidé Ortigas Ave. Branch.

"I believe in Rapidé's business concept and automotive expertise," says Jomari, a proud owner of Philippine Touring Car Champion Driver. "I'm a very satisfied Rapidé customer so I decided to run my own Rapidé shop."

Meanwhile, Mr. Eliot Marcelo Cayetano will operate a new franchise store in Cabanatuan, dubbed its sixth in Region 3. Mr. Cayetano is a sales distributor for five provinces and owns a Fresh Plant in Cabanatuan.

Known for its quick repair services such as Oil Change, Tune Up, Brakes, Suspension, Clutch, and Aircon, Rapidé mechanics state-of-the-art equipment, professionally-trained technicians and installs certified parts.

With nearly 50 branches in Metro Manila and key provincial cities in Luzon, Rapidé continues to expand its branch network in Cebu, Davao, Subic, Boracay, Dumaguete, Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo, Bicol, Baguio and Iloilo.

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GALLERIA

1 INDIANA JONES
2 CARE GIVER
3 INDIANA JONES
4 SEX AND THE CITY
5 VICTORY
6 CARE GIVER
7 21
8 IndieSine: Sa Pagitan ng MAMYOSA
9 INDIANA JONES / IRON MAN
10 INDIANA JONES / IDOY CULTURE

ATTENTION:
JAILED FOR CREATIVITY
IN FILM MAKING

ERMITA

1 INDIANA JONES
2 SEX AND THE CITY
3 CARE GIVER
4 IRON MAN
5 WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS / INDIANA JONES
6 CARE GIVER
7 21
8 INDIANA JONES
9 IRON MAN
10 KUNG PA RIN / INDIANA JONES

METRO EAST

1 WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS / INDIANA JONES
2 CARE GIVER
3 CARE GIVER
4 SEX AND THE CITY
5 IRON MAN
6 INDIANA JONES
7 INDIANA JONES
8 21

NOVALICHES

1 CARE GIVER
2 INDIANA JONES
3 21
4 IRON MAN

PIONEER

1 21
2 INDIANA JONES
3 CARE GIVER
4 SEX AND THE CITY

STA. ROSA

1 INDIANA JONES
2 21
3 THE POSSESSED
4 CARE GIVER

LIPA

1 INDIANA JONES
2 CARE GIVER
3 WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS
4 CARE GIVER / IRON MAN

DASMARIÑAS

1 THE POSSESSED
2 INDIANA JONES
3 21
4 CARE GIVER

IMUS

1 CARE GIVER
2 IRON MAN
3 INDIANA JONES
4 21

ANGELES

1 INDIANA JONES
2 CARE GIVER
3 ASYLUM
4 21

STARMILLS

1 21
2 CARE GIVER
3 MEGA SHARK
4 KUNG PA RIN / INDIANA JONES
5 CARE GIVER
6 INDIANA JONES

BACOLOD

1 CARE GIVER
2 INDIANA JONES
3 WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS / CARE GIVER
4 21
5 ASYLUM
6 THE SAVAGES

ILOILO

1 INDIANA JONES
2 CARE GIVER
3 IRON MAN / CARE GIVER
4 21
5 PATHOLOGY
6 NEVER BACK DOWN

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ROUNDUP

Billy Crawford, Kapamilya

Billy Crawford is back in the country and has agreed to host the second season of MTV-CBTV's music talent search, "Pinoy Dream Academy."

The Filipino-American musician/actor, who first achieved international stardom in 2003 in France and other European countries with albums that went to the top of the charts, has also signed on a mentoring host on the Sunday TV show "ASAP."

"PDA Season 2" premieres June 14.

Film tourism campaign

Tourism Secretary Joe Durano and Undersecretary for Tourism Planning and Promotions Eduardo Jaime Jr. recently met with actor Cesar Montano to discuss building up the image of the Philippines as a setting for international film projects and as an ideal provider of post-production services. Montano also proposed campaigns that will entice film enthusiasts abroad to experience events such as the annual Cinema Manila Film Festival and the Cinemanila International Film Festival.

Coming soon

"Terminator Salvation: The Future Begins" began principal photography on May 5 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

This new installment of "The Terminator" film franchise is set in post-apocalyptic 2018. Christian Bale stars as John Connor, the man fated to lead the human resistance against Skynet and its army of Terminators.

Log on to www.terminatorsalvation.com.

Jack TV's nominations

Jack TV's animated "LSB" (Legion of Extraordinary Beings) show received nine nominations in the forthcoming 35th Annual Daytime Entertainment Emmy Awards.

"The Batman," (airs Mondays at 5:30 p.m.) got four nods, including one for Outstanding Special Class Animated Program.

Garnering three nominations is "Legion of Superheroes," a tale of a young group of super-powered teens fighting evil in the future. It airs Thursdays at 5:30 p.m.

"Generator Unleashed," a new series featuring Looney Tunes favorites in a superhero setting, airs Fridays at 5:30 p.m.) and "Ben 10" each received one nomination.

The 35th Annual Daytime Entertainment

BILLY Crawford

CHRISTIAN Bale

Emmy Awards will be broadcast live on June 20 from the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood.

'HSM' dance contest

The Disney Channel launches "High School Musical: My School Rocks!"—the first regional inter-school dance competition in Southeast Asia.

The hit drawn inspiration from the highly successful, Emmy Award-winning TV movie "High School Musical."

The contest is open to primary or secondary school students between ages 10-17 in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Korea, Hong Kong, Palau and Papua New Guinea.

Any number of teams comprising two to five schoolmates can get together to represent their school. Each team must choreograph its own original dance moves to either "Gotcha Good in the Game" from "HSM2" or "When There is Us" from "HSM1 2."

The teams should then record their performance on video and upload their entry on or before June 30 to http://www.disneychannel-asia.com or send it to:

Disney Channel
My School Rocks
c/o Information Gateway Inc
3/L Mobile Entertainment Centre
104 Rada St., Legaspi Village
Makati City 1229

The winning team gets to perform in "High School Musical: Live!" in Hong Kong Disneyland. All the finalist teams will have their performances produced into a show that will air on Disney Channel across Southeast Asia.

For more info, call 0908-814-8175 or email mail.inter@disney.com and post@carlsoa@gmail.com.

FEEDBACK

From: Jose Aurelio (joseaurelio@yahoo.com) of Sampaloc, Manila

I watched with disgust a feature on a "fish" now saved by GMA 7 news on May 2. The scheme was, whoever catches a pigeat can have it and start a business with it. GMA 7 made it look like fun, but the reporter herself said the pigeon were scared to death as they tried to evade their captors in vain. She was right: a pigeon died because the panicpanic pounced on him. The local government could have just ruffled off the pigeon. Have a heart. I wonder what animal activists would have to say about that comment.

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 SEX & THE CITY	2 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	3 CAREGIVER	4 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL			
GLORIETTA 4	1 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	2 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	3D SEX & THE CITY				
	4 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	5 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	6 CAREGIVER	7 21			
GREENBELT 1	1 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	2 SEX & THE CITY					
GREENBELT 3	1D SEX & THE CITY	2D INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL					
	3 21	4 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	5 SEX & THE CITY				
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1D SEX & THE CITY	2 CAREGIVER					
	3 21	4 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	5 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL				
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 SEX & THE CITY	2 CAREGIVER	3 21	4 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL			
MARKET! MARKET!	1 CAREGIVER	2 SEX & THE CITY					
	3 21	4 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	5 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL				
TRINOMA	1 CAREGIVER	2 21	3 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	4 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL			
	5 INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	6 SEX & THE CITY	7D SEX & THE CITY				

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — Trumpets Playshop Workshop: April 2 - June 2, Glorietta Homegrove. For inquiries, pls. call Rina Regard at 7584644

Greenbelt — AFRO-BRAZILIAN Weekends at Greenbelt with movement, music and materialsgate. May 31, 7 PM, Greenbelt 3, 2nd level

Alabang Town Center — Summer Workshops: Short Dance Classes. May 19 – June 1, 3 PM, Sports and Hobbies Facets

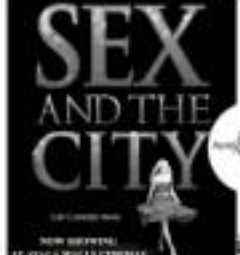
Ayala Center Cebu — Park and Shop Promo. May 1214

Market! Market! — Asian Tropical Living: An Interior Design Exhibit. March – June '08, Home Market, 3rd Level

Christian Life — ONE FAIR - The perfect spot for concerts, engagements & corporate events! is now accepting bookings for May to July 2008. For inquiries & bookings, pls. call 7527444 or 1614881

Ayala Museum — Paintings by 19th Century artist Simon Flores. ongoing until May 25, 2008. For more information, please call 7577417 or 25 local 28 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

Tri Noma — Philippine Star Job Fair. May 30-31, 10 AM – 8 PM, Activity Center



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Greenbelt — Glorietta — Greenbelt — Alabang Town Center — Ayala Center Cebu — Tri Noma

Wu Chun fever starts in 'Romantic Princess'

'Salamat Dok'

On ABS-CBN today, 7 a.m., "Salamat Dok" discusses how young Filipinos can be discouraged from smoking. The country's smokers start at age 14 to 17, according to the National Health Epidemiology Survey of 2003. The Global Youth Survey (2007) revealed that one of three Filipino teens is a smoker.

'Matanglawin'

ABS-CBN's weekly reality adventure travel show "Matanglawin" takes an outdoor time shot, 10 a.m., starting today. Kim Rikman travels around the country in search of rare and interesting botanicals, edge, to dubiously legitimate and wanted women's preserves. Today, Kim comes face to face with crocodiles and frog cobras.

JIGGY Musical

'Pinoy Meets World'

Jaya Kapuso Jiggy Manicad today to "Pinoy Meets World," as he explores Poland and the Czech Republic.

Jiggy reviews the mass reconciliation of more than three million Jews during the Nazi occupation of Poland.

In Wadowice, Jiggy visits the humble abode of Pope John Paul II. He drops back in time as he walks around Dr. Jagiet's medieval streets and castles.

"Pinoy Meets World" airs after "Full House" on GMA-7.

Taiwanese heartthrob

The Wu Chun fever continues as the hottest and most sought-after Taiwanese heartthrob returns on Philippine television with "Romantic Princess."

After the phenomenal hit "Meteor Rain," Wu plays Jo Xun Feng in this latest Affli-CBN weekday offering.

"Romantic Princess" airs weekdays after "El Cuerpo."

CHERYL Cosio of "Salamat Dok"

Lea, woman of the word

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

HERE'S A SELDOM-SEEN side of a very public person.

Singer-actress Lea Salonga a quite fond of the written word...as evidenced in her popular blog aptly titled, "The World According to Mommy."

She loves writing, needless to say, and now she gets to spoof one this "not-so-secret" passion in a new undertaking, a weekly column for Inquirer Entertainment, which will make its grand debut soon.

Meanwhile, she answers some questions about her as a writer, her newly-ranging but forever-fresh 20th anniversary concerts and rehearsing for the forthcoming musical, "Urinetown."

For you, what is the joy of writing?

For me, the joy in writing is achieved on different levels. One, when I'm able to share with my fans and friends what's going on with my life as it's happening (when I'm creative to write, that is). Like, when I spot a beautiful sunrise and it affects me... when something my daughter does is particularly inspiring... or when something that one of my friends says or does hits me in the solar plexus. Two, it has served as a catharsis for me. For as long as I can remember, I've kept a journal...and when something really HAS me off, whatever it might be, I write about it. The exercise of putting my thoughts down, turning something abstract into something concrete, is a great relief. When I can dot the thought in front of me, on my computer screen or on a sheet of paper, I come to any one of the following realizations: 1) that I need to do something about whatever it is that's making me feel so angsty or...2) that my thoughts were silly and that I need to get over them.

Describe your writing regimen. Are you methodical? Do you write more easily in the morning, or at night when everyone is asleep?

The mood strikes me when my bedroom is dark and my husband is fast asleep. I can't write when there's too much going on around me... I need peace and quiet. I don't keep a schedule (which will make writing a regular column a challenge!)... I write when I'm struck by inspiration.

Is writing your quiet time? Or is it meditation, full of angst and drama? :)

Writing is a quiet, reflective, contemplative time for me, unless I'm answering interview questions, when I focus more on telling a story that's already taken place. And keeping my spelling and grammar as correct as possible. I'm not always successful in either regard, though! I (usually) leave out the angst and drama in life. I do live a fairly easy existence... when it's appropriate or when I'm in real need of release. But it's not [a] terribly turbulent [one].

How would you find the time to write your Inquirer column, considering that you have a concert and musical in the works? How quickly do you think will you come to terms with the harsh reality of deadlines? Can you cite a painful battle in your life—motherhood, perhaps?

I need time to mind down from a show to be honest. I could use the decompression exercise that a regular column will give me. I think when I was doing "Miss Saigon," or even as recently as last year, when I was in "Les Mis," it would take me hours to fall asleep. I'd play video games, watch late night TV, surf the Net... anything to relax and get settled in. Of course, video games would end up over-stimulating me rather than relaxing me!

When you were in school, did you enjoy the essay-writing assignments/exams? Exactly what was your course in how-to's? In Science?

In Freshmen, I just took some classes in Filipino History and Philosophy (in Aseano, I was a Biology major. I think my classmates enjoyed the essay writing more than I did. According to my Aseano friends, "Yeh, nobody was any professor so mean!" I was never really sure how, though, even to this day. I tended to be very concise and to the point, which is how I try to be in real life. However, I've come to understand and realize that an essay allows for breadth, time and thinking, as well as room for explanations. To be concise, although efficient, isn't always the right course of action.

How does your job as singer-actress inform/enrich your writing?

I don't know that it does. I think living life and letting it get to you will enrich you, period.

Can you imagine yourself writing during breaks at rehearsals or a show? While waiting at the airport? Do you see yourself having a notebook within reach all the time?

Yes really, no. I find other ways to occupy my time at airports or during rehearsals. Resting rehearsals, I use the time to get to know my co-workers, or read the script to see how much more I can dig into a character. At the airport, I like to walk around and shop, especially if it's in Hong Kong or Singapore. I usually find the energy to write when it's dark, when my imagination wishes, and strikes hard.

Your writing buddy—Mac or PC?

Hands down, no room, a Mac.

How many hours do you spend in front of the computer? Online?

Oh... a lot....[in's] embarrassing!

Do you see yourself writing your memoirs someday?

Actually, I'd rather not. I'm massively protective of my personal life. I'd find it quite contradictory to my nature to lease on many closet shows when I've gone on behind closed doors. I'm just not that kind of girl. I don't "kiss and tell."

If you end up writing about famous people you meet, which aspects of their personality do you think will appeal to you most?

Hmmm... how genuinely they remain in spite of their fame...that interests me. I'm supremely turned off by people who think they're God's gift to mankind.

Starting a column is a great way to celebrate your 30th year in show biz, right? Or are you being pressured yourself?

Hahaha! It'll be something different with which to start year 31, yes!

What things still leave you in awe, apart from meeting legendary stars like Dolphy?

Great talent, famous or not...that's what gets my juices to hit the floor. I'm also in awe of big hearts and generosity, humility in greatness, and a fantastic sense of humor.

Tony nominee pens...

Front page ▸

pioneer-day trend of outsourcing jobs and the proliferation of customer care centers, cell phones and computers. Stephen adapted the musical from a book by Studs Terkel, "Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do," and tapped James Taylor, Mary Rodgers, Susan Birkenhead, Craig Carnelia and Micki Grant to contribute songs. He asked Lin-Manuel to reorganize the score material for the singing/dancing by Gordon Greenberg.

Marie-France said on, "I was so thrilled to have been asked to do 'Working,' one only because I get to work again with Stephen Schwartz with whom I have done several readings of 'Children of Eden' (which hopefully will come back to Broadway), but most especially because I get to work with the fabulously talented Tony nominee Lin-Manuel Miranda! This musical has such a great way of giving characters a voice. It seems like he physically crawled into their heads and comes out with a song."

The Stephen Lo Stella production, which we enjoyed watching in the off-Broadway 1960s-inspired show "Shout! The Mod Musical," in 2006, added, "I was doubly honored when I discovered, two weeks before opening night, that Lin-Manuel had written a song for me, a duet with Michael Arden. In it, Nichol plays an older auto worker, and I portray an immigrant nanny. I can't tell you (how) I felt when, as musical director Mark Hartman (Norman Q) was teaching me the song, he turned to us (Jaqui and I) and secretly underneath the piano to Ellen, coincidentally singing a lullaby to her daughter for many, Antonella (she-baby) that we sang my moms (Abigail Bautista) is coming to see the show.

"But I also get incredibly excited. If this show does go further down the road, and maybe the first Filipino on Broadway! Singing in Filipino yo! That thought is overwhelming to me! Dyan, more so the idea that it raises awareness of the largely anonymous population of immigrant workers who come here to do what no one wants to do so as to bring in the numbers; people like my friend Carmen whom I interviewed for research for the show. People who have come here hoping for a better life and not giving up until they get it."

Marie-France moved from Manila to work in Canada but her passion for acting pushed her to try her luck in New York. Her hard work, persistence and, most important, genuine talent, are paying off. In addition to major performances and guest appearances on TV, the daughter of Eloy Ancilla, one of the Philippines' best sportscasters, hosts "Unwind A2Z" on the A2Z5 cable channel. She met Lin-Manuel when she received the Stockbridge Playfest for this weekly show.

Variety Hollywood's trade bible, praised "Working" and the cast, including Marie-France, Joe Hendelman wrote: "(Working's) long life is likely to be extended through a relatively optimistic version of the show... What worked in the past remains effective now. Marie-France Ancilla leads the cast through the drudgery of 'Millwork,' going through the repetitive motions required to operate a machine that makes fabric for mattresses. The cast is strong in both song and story segments ... the obvious cues and affection that Joe gets into this new version captures the essence of working humanity. It remains a series of the common spirit that somehow allows us to get up each day and make it through another work week."

More good reviews

Florida's theater critics also cited Marie-France's performance in their reviews.

Mike Hudak, Bradenton Herald: "Marie-France Ancilla shows off her impressive voice... 'Millwork' and her comedic chops in 'Sexy the flight attendant ...'

Antonia Herald Tribune: "Some remaining things will resonate, such as the drudgery described in James Taylor's tender 'Millwork' by Marie-France Ancilla."

Mark Leib, Creative Loafing weekly newspaper: "Marie-France Ancilla is droning as a flight attendant who remembers how a night spent gambling in Vegas was followed by an emergency landing because we lost a pin out of the rear gear."

Point "Big TV" on ABS-CBN is on accidental arranging of 6 Stephen Schwartz musical - Marie-France has definitely come along way.

FINEY among the cast of "Working," who were all lauded by the critics.

AN ACTRESS who got her first break as a Mickey girl in Mickey's TV and stage shows, Marie-France is being praised for leading the ensemble in a "heartbreaking" rendition of James Taylor's "Millwork" in "Working."

* * *

Still on Stephen, in Stat West Players' current production of his "Pippin" is GA, Filipino-American actors Cesar Espinosa and Ryan Chua, and musicians Marc Macalintal (also on keyboards in the live band) and Vince Reyes (guitar) duties. Like "Working," "Pippin" was originally staged in the 1970s by no less than the late Bob Fosse. Director Tim Dang also updated Stephen's stage classical by infusing anime and hip-hop themes. The result is an engaging show with an extended run through June 22 at the David Henry Hwang Theater in downtown Life Little Tokyo.

More information on those talented Fil-Ams in "Pippin" and East West Players, the premier Asian-American theater organization in the US which nurtured Soriella, "Thavung," and retained on the former First Lady of the Philippines, is available on www.eastwestplayers.org.

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